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TWO SERMONS.

VPON THE ACT SVNDAY, BEING the 10th of Iuly. 1625.

Deliuered at St MARIES in Oxford

PSAL. 133. 1.

Behold how good, and how pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together in vnitie.

OXFORD,
Printed by I. L. and W. T. for WILLIAM TVRNER.
Anno Dom. 1625.

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SUNDAY, BEING

the 10th of July.

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Delivered at St MARIES

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BRITISH MUSEUM

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DAVID'S ENLARGEMENT.

THE MORNING SERMON ON THE ACT SVNDAY.

Preached by HENRY KING,
Inceptor in Diuinity, one of his
MAIESTIES Chaplaines
in Ordinary.

PSAL. 18. 36.

Thou hast enlarged my steps vnder mee,
that my feet did not slip.

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ON THE ACT SUNDAY.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

PSAL. 18. 36.
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that my feet did not slip.

DAVID'S ENLARGEMENT.

PSAL. 32. VERS. 5.

I said I will confesse my sinnes [or transgressions] vnto the Lord. And thou forgauest the iniquitie of my sinne.

THis Text hath two generall parts. The first records *Dauids Repentance*. The second, *Gods mercy* to him.

The former part containes these seuerall circumstances: 1 *A resolution, I said.* 2 The *Act resolv'd vpon*, Confession. *I will confesse.* 3 The *Subiect*, of that confession; *Sinnes, or transgressions.* 4 Their *pluralitie*, or the *Extent of his confession*; not *sinne*, but *sinnes*. A terme imply-

ing both their generality and number. For although the *Septuagint* read ἀνομίαν, the *Hebrew* is, *sinnes.* 5 Their *propriety*, which he assumes to himselfe; *Mea, my sinnes.* 6 He specifies the Confessor, *vnto the Lord.*

In the latter part, I onely obserue two circumstances. 1 the *Readinesse*, and *Propension*, and *speed* of Gods mercy. *He sayes he will confesse, &c.* and presently, *Tu remisisti*, *Thou forgauest.* 2 *his Bounty* set downe in such termes, as may convey vnto him the most liberall pardon: *Iniquitatem peccati*, the very formality of the *Sin*: not *my sinne*, but the *Iniquity of my sinne too*; both the *Act*, and the *Obliquity*; both the *Guilt* of the sinne, and the *Punishment* due vnto it.

1 *I said.*

The contemplation of a religious worke, doth much affect a good man: and howsoeuer the Act onely crownes him, yet the purpose delights him. *I was glad (* saith *Dauid) when men said vnto me, we will go into the house of the Lord.* See with what pious Alacrity he vtters his intentions to an Act of Religion; it doth him good but to speake of it. And here you may discerne as much Alacrity in his intended repentance, when he records the very determination, that which at first was either barely design'd by his thoughts, or at most but said, *I said.*

Words in Gods Method are the Introduction to Deeds; His *Fiat*, was the Seminary of all being; for *he said onely, and it was done.* That man who sayes well, is engaged to equall his words; else

elſe like a Bankrupt, he forfaits that good opinion, his pretences and ſpeeches had wonne. S^t. *Auguſtine* ſayes, *Verba ſunt folia*: Words are as leaues; and in good trees, leaues are the pledges of fruit that enſues. He that onely ſpeakes, and does not, is not a fruitfull Chriſtian; rather he is like a Sycomor, whoſe iſſue is nothing but a leaſe. This is not enough. *Fructus quæritur* (ſaith the ſame Father) God expects from vs what *Dauid* here exhibites; fruit, not leaſe, or not leaſe without fruit. He ſayes deuoutly, and from thoſe ſeeds, a repentance to a new life ſprings: *I ſaid, I will confeſſe, &c.*

Aug. Serm. 5. de verb. Dom.

Ibid.

Iſtud dicere nihil aliud eſt, quam ſecum deliberare; It is a *Deliberation*, or it ſignifies as much as *Decernere, Conſtituere*, to purpoſe, or to reſolue. *Reſolutions* are the Moulds wherein Actions are caſt; and no man can define a *Deed* better, then to call it the effect of what our purpoſe had contriued. And euery purpoſe is a ſilent Dialogue, betwixt the Soule and her Faculties, by whoſe conſent, that which we reſolue, is eſtabliſhed. For man is a *Theater*, wherein are many ſubtile ſpectators, waiting vpon euery action; He is a ſhort Modell of a Common-wealth. Each Senſe is an Agent, each Faculty an Officer; Hee hath his *Common-Pleas* in his *Common ſenſe*; his *Chancery* in the *Conſcience*; he hath his *Proiectors*, and thoſe as buſie, as the State hath any; *Thought* and *Phantaſie*, and the quicke *Imagination*. The *Memory* is his *Recorder*; and laſtly, the Tongue is the *Speaker* in *this* Aſſembly, who reports thoſe Acts which

Marlorat.

Lorinus.

which are designed: *I said.*

But our Intents doe not alwayes come to publication, nay they do not alwayes need it; and then the office of the tongue is not required. A resolution may sometimes speake without the Organs of vtterance; it may be intelligible, it may be audible, and yet not vocall: As Saint *Ambrose* speakes of *Susanna*, *Conscientia loquebatur vbi vox non audiebatur.* In religious purposes that determine in God; and in which there is no parties interested but God, and the soule; there is no necessity to vse words. Words are but the Interpreters of our mindes one to another, but as Midwiues that deliuer our thoughts; and howeuer betwixt Man and Man this verball traffieke be necessary: yet betwixt vs and God that sees our thoughts before the tongue hath formed them into syllables, or set the stampe of language vpon them, it is not so. He reades vs in the power of speech, and not onely in the Organs which actuate that power: Hee is the Καρδιογνώστης, so well acquainted with the heart, that he dictates to it, as it doth to the tongue. And therefore hee that vnderstands our words whilest they are in *Principijs*, in their concepon and parentage; whilest they are yet *Intra causas*, lodged and couched within their causes, (as Saint *Augustine* expresseth it; *Vox mea nondom in ore erat, & auris Dei iam in Corde erat.* He, I say, that knowes our thoughts, not onely before we vtter them in words, but before wee our selues know what we shall next thinke, cannot need

Ambros. offic. lib. 1: cap. 3.

a *Dixi* (*I said*) to informe him of our purposes: since his intelligence precedes our thoughts, hee cannot but take his information from them, better then from our words; and so the sense of the Text will hold as well in a *Cogitavi* (as one Translation of ours readeth it) *I thought I will confesse*, as in a *Dixi, I said*. For in Gods apprehension they are all one, and no way distinguisht, saue in a little Priority of time; for *thoughts* are words elder Brothers: and the Dialect they speake, is our Mother tongue, the originall language of Mankinde which neuer yet suffered confusion. When the tongues were dispersed at *Babel*, the *thoughts* were not; and howsoeuer each Nation be distinguished in his peculiar speech, we all thinke alike; euen as anger and laughter haue the same wayes of expression in all parts of the world. So that this *Dixi* was not so much the language of *Dauids* Tongue, as of his Heart; *Corde pronunciare erat*, He spake vnto God in his *Thoughts*, which are the most constant, most vnalterable dialect, and therefore most proper to expresse the certainty of that Act, which followes vpon this Resolution in the next part, *His confession, I said I will confesse, &c.*

Aug. in Psal. 32.

2 Sinne is the weightiest of all sorrowes, the Apostle calls it κατ' ἐξοχήν, *The thing that presseth downe*. 'Tis the heauiest calamity man can suffer vnder: *Iniquitates meæ grauatæ sunt super me*, cryes the *Psalmist*. *Mine iniquities ouer-burden me*; Our blessed Sauiour was so sensible of this weight, that in his fearefull conflict in the garden he

2 *I will confesse.* Heb. 12. 1. Psal. 33.

he profeſt. *His ſoule was heauy vnto death.* They were our ſinnes, which ſo depreſt his invincible patience, that he *ſweats*, and that vnnaturally, in the bearing of them. And in his complaint, where he puts the ſorrowes of the whole world in ballance againſt his owne, *See all ye that paſſe by, if euer ſorrow were like my ſorrow*; the reaſon of that *Non ſicut*, which turned the ballance on his ſide, was, becauſe the ſinne of Mankinde lay in his ſcale, which like a Mine of Lead (or as *Zachary* ſtiles it, *Talentum plumbi*) out-weighed all the reſt. Now as ſometimes a ſad ſtory lightens the heart of him that told it, and ſorrowes finde eaſe by the relation; ſo doe ſinnes.

Lament. 1. 12.

Zach. 5. 7.

Eſt aliquid, fatale malum per verba leuare.

He that hath opportunity to vnfold his griefe, hath made the firſt approach to comfort; and he that hath the Grace to acknowledge his fault, is in a ready way to pardon: There is no affliction ſo great as his, that wants a tongue to vtter it; and there is no ſinne of ſuch a deſperate malignity, as the ſilent ſinne; when the Offender is dumbe and ſpeechleſſe. A *miſery* lodg'd in the heart, is like an *Exhalation* incloſed within the Earth, which ſhakes the foundation of Reaſon, and Patience; or like a *dampe*, it ouerlayes the Spirits, *Strangulat incluſus dolor:* but when it hath found an iſſue by the Eye, to weepe out at, or a vent by the tongue, ſtreight it growes tamer. When once a window is opened to giue it Aire, that fume which would

haue

haue ſtifled vs, breathes out, & cleares the roome. Such a Meteore, ſuch a boyſterous Exhalation is ſinne. What ſtrange convulſions doth it cauſe within the ſoule? How doth it contract our hopes of Mercy; and like an Eaſt-winde dry vp, and wither our comforts? what ſtormes, what guilty conflicts, what blacke cloudes of deſpaire doth it raiſe in the Conſcience? but ſo ſoone as a ſinner recollects himſelfe, is brought to a remorſe, how calmely is the ſtorme allayed, by a religious contrition? how ſweetly doth this cloud diſcharge it ſelfe, when it relents into a ſhowre of penitent teares? For 'tis the moſt naturall way for ſinne to evaporate by the eye, (as *Elias Cretenſis* ſayes) *Ex peccati fumo ortæ ſunt lachrymæ*: Laſtly, how gently doth this dangerous vapour breathe out by a devout *confeſſion*? *I ſaid I will confeſſe.*

Our Lawes ſo farre prejudicate ſilence in a malefactour, that waues the ordinary and open way of tryall, that they account him a Fellon againſt himſelfe, a conſpiratour againſt his owne life, and guilty of his owne bloud; holding him worthy of no death, but ſuch an one, as like a monument of ſhame, ſerues to object his ſilent contumacy. As if it meant to cruſh out, and by weighty expreſſions force the confeſſion of that fact, from the dead body; which no perſwaſion could winne from the conſcience, whilſt the party yet liued.

Dauid himſelfe profeſſes, that whilſt he remined ſpeechleſſe, he found a great abatement in his comforts, a generall conſumption, waſting both his

his body and minde too; *when I held my tongue, my bones consumed. Quoniam non protuli ore confessionem ad salutem, omnis firmitas mea, in infirmitate consenuit* (so Saint *Augustine* paraphrases him.) Thus you see his silence corrodes and macerates him euen to the bone; but so soone as he opens his mouth, and disguises not his sinne, straight he findes a spatious *enlargement*, in the forgiuenesse of all his sinnes.

verse. 3.

Aug. in Psal. 32. 3.

One sayes righly, that sinne is Νόσος τῆς ψυχῆς, the *disease of the soule*; an *Epedemicall* sickenesse whereof the whole world labours. *Magnus per totum mundum iacebat ægrotus.* There is nothing so pernicious to this Malady (saith another Father) as silence, Νόσου τροφὸς σιὼπη, *Silence foments and cherishes the infirmitie.* Therefore by the rules of cure, nothing can be more medicinable then *Confession.* Which (in *Origens* phrase) is *vomitus sordium*, a clearing the *Conscience* of those vitious obstructions, which nourish the soules diseases: distempering the *Complexion* of our *Faith*, so as we grow cold in Religion; and either want appetite, to serue God; or capacity to learne his Law; or heate of zeale, to concoct what we haue learned; or palate to taste the comforts, which wee should find in applying Gods mercy vnto vs.

Ambrosius.

Origen.

So that there is not such a speedy redresse of *Sinne*, as a *penitent confession.* Yet not such a Confession as the *Church of Rome* would submit vs to: which is (to vse *Cassanders* words) *Conscientiæ Carnificina, quam nemo moderatus approbat*; a racking

Cassand. Consult. art. 11.

racking or torturing the *Conſcience*, which no wiſe man would endure, no reaſonable man approue. Indeed thoſe on that ſide, haue made this, which Chriſt intended the happy inſtrument of our peace with God, as the *Maſter-key* to open into all the *ſecrets* of *Chriſtendome*: as a *Picklock* to poſſeſſe them of thoſe *myſteries* of *State*, whoſe knowledge hath troubled, nay endangered all parts of the World, where the *Romiſh colours* haue bin aduanced. A tyrannicall way of knowledge, to make the Practitioners feared, and hated at once. 'Tis juſtly theirs.

—[a] *Scire volunt ſecreta domus, atq; inde timeri.*

A curious *Engine*, wherewith they wring out any ſmall deſigne, that may make againſt them, vnder paine of *Damnation*, if it be not declared: but take a libertie to ſeale vp in ſecrecy any Deed, though neuer ſo horrid (be it *Murther* or *Treaſon*) ſo aduantagious to their cauſe. And this, though the *Confeſſor* knowes, being put to his Oathe, he may lawfully ſweare he doth not; ſince he knowes it only as a ſecret, but not to reueale. *Intelligitur ſe neſcire ad revelandum, aut taliter quod poſſit dicere.* They are the very words of [b] *Franciſcus à Victoria*, I doe not here derogate from the vſe of *Confeſſion*; for by the Churches appointment, we practiſe a forme of *publique Confeſſion* in our *Liturgie*. Nay in this place we finde a *Priuate Confeſſion*, made by *Dauid vnto the Lord*, which is no leſſe neceſſary for vs then him. 'Tis againſt that *Auricular Confeſſion* of *Rome* I here ſpeake, which ſo clogges our *Chriſtian*

[a] Iuvenal.

[b] *Sed quid faciet Confeſſor cùm interrogatur de peccato, quod audierit in confeſſione, an poſſit dicere ſe neſcire? Reſpond. Secundum omnes quod ſic. Sed quid ſi cogatur iurare? Dico quod poteſt & debet iurare ſe neſcire, quia intelligitur ſe neſcire extra confeſſionem, & ſic verum iurat. Sed fac quod iudex vel prelatus ex malitiâ exigat à me iuramentum, an ſciam in confeſſione? Reſpond. quod coactus iuret ſe neſcire in confeſſione, quia intelligitur ſe neſcire ad revelandum aut taliter quod poſſit dicere. Sum: ſacramen: Artic: 184 Pag 96. b.*

an Liberty, that it layes a *neceſſity* vpon vs, to confeſſe vnto the *Preiſt*, or elſe denies vs our ſaluation. And beſides the neceſſity layed vpon vs, it tyes vs to an *impoſſibility*; exacting the particular enumeratiō of all the Sinnes & ſeueral ſorts of Offences whereof we are guiltie. A taske which the *Prophet Dauid* vtterlie declines, appealing from this vnjuſt impoſition, in the words of the *Pſalme*, *Who knowes how oft he offends? Lord cleanſe me from my ſecret ſinnes.*

Pſal. 19. 12.

Let the *other ſide* then for the countenance of their way of *Confeſſion*, vrge that *Embaſſie* addreſt to *Charles the Fift*, from the Gouernours of *Norimberg*, touching the reviving and re-eſtabliſhing of *Auricular Confeſſion* amongſt them: vpon a pretence, that ſince that cuſtome was left off, their *Common-wealth* ſwarm'd with ſinne much more then formerly. Which propoſition of theirs the *Emperour* in effect did but ſcoffe at, and deride, (euen by the Confeſſion of *Lorinus* the *Ieſuite*, who reports it,) Intimating vnto them, that they would neuer haue ſought ſo much at his hands, but that, it ſeem'd, they wanted a ſufficient engine to examine Malefactors: ſuppoſing that the *Eccleſiaſticall Rack*, when the *Preiſt* ſhould vndertake them in an *Auricular Confeſſion*, would make them diſcouer more, thē the *politicke Rack*, or all the tortures, the publicke Executioner could giue them.

Lorinus com. in Pſal. 32.

Let them object to vs, as *Eugenius* the *Fourth*, in the *Councell* at *Florence*, did to the *Greekes*: *ut veſtri ſacerdotes & Pontifices non confitentur?* Why doe

doe not your Preists exact this Confession? As we refuse not *priuate Confession* made to God, nay sometimes, a *priuate Confession* to our *ghostly Father*, the *Minister*: who hath authoritie to diuest vs of any scruples, which may arise in our Consciences, and to pronounce an *Absolution* vpon our hearty *Repentance*: Yet we will not loose, or betray our Freedome so much, as to do that *Act* by *constraint*, which ought to be as *free* and *voluntary*, as *Davids* resolution in this place. *I said, I will confesse.* We haue no reason to stand to the courtesie of *Rome* for that *Pardon*, which *Christ* hath freely giuen vs; nor yet to suffer her *Merchãts* to erect a new *Staple*, or put an *Impost* vpon our saluation, which is exempt from all *Custome*, from any acknowledgment, saue onely to *Christ*, whose worke it was. We haue no cause but to be very well assured, that we may be saued without *Auricular Confession*; since in that *sacred Booke*, which, we beleeue, containes all that may conduce to our saluation, we finde no tracke or mention of it.

Bonaventure grants, that howeuer the *Formall part* of *Confession*, (i.) *the power of Absolution*, were instituted by *Christ*; yet the *Materiall part*, which is the *Detection of the sinne*, and the necessity of disclosing it, was not so. For at the most, it was onely insinuated by Christ, but promulgated by *St Iames*. *Confesse your sinnes one to another.* In which place, (as *Bullinger* well inferres) they that vnderstand aright, will finde a reciprocall obligation layed vpon the *Preist*, to confesse to the *People*, as well as the

Ad sentent. lib. 4. quest. 17. distinct. 3.

Ia. 5. 16.

Bullinger Decad. 4. ser. 2. de pœnitent.

People to the *Preist*. And for any better *Evidence* then this, to confirme their opinion, out of the Gospell, I am confident they haue none. We finde when our *Sauiour* cleansed the *Leper*, hee bad him *goe and shew himselfe to the Priest*, and *offer the gift which Moses commanded*: but he bad him not *confesse to the Priest*. And to the *adulterous woman*, he giues a *Vade*. *Goe*, but not to any *Confessor*: Nay, we finde no Confession taken from her by himselfe: the whole Condition of her *Absolution* in that place is, *Vade, & noli amplius peccare*. *Goe, and sinne no more*. But *Eckius* and others answere, that the *power of Absolution* was not as yet assign'd ouer by *Christ*, vnto his *Church*, and therefore our Sauiour neither practised it himselfe, nor sent them vnto any Priest: which had it been, 'tis likely he would haue done. Well then, graunt him as much as he alleadgeth, that the *Commission to Absolue*, was not as yet giuen to the *Apostles*; and it shall appeare, that in those very words, wherein Christ conveyes this *Authority* to them, *Auricular Confession* receiues it's deathes wound.

Mat. 8. 4.

In the *Gospell of S^t. Iohn*, when he tels them, *As my Father sent me, so send I you*. Hee there giues them authority to *remit, or to retaine sinnes*, but not to exact any *Auricular Confession*; Hee doth not there erect any *Tribunall* for the *Priests*, where they should sit as *Iudges* ouer mens *Consciences*, to acquite or condemne at their pleasure. This is not the meaning of, to *Remit* and to *Retaine*. They do not import a *Iuditiary power* (as the *Church of*

Iohn 20. 21.

Rome

Rome vnwarrantably assumes,) but a *Ministeriall power*, to publish the mercies of God to repentant Sinners, and to denounce his vengeance against the obstinate and impenitent. This is S^t. *Ieromes* Interpretation vpon those words; *Quicquid ligaveris in terris, &c. Whatsoeuer thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in Heauen, and whatsoeuer thou shalt loose, &c.* Where he sayes, that as the *Leviticall Priest* is said to make the *Leper cleane, or vncleane, because he pronounced him so*; euen thus, the *Euangelicall Priests* in the Gospell, *Remit or Retaine sinnes*, because in *their preachings they declare, which sinnes are remitted, and which retained by God. Pro officio suo, cùm peccatorum audierit varietates, scit qui ligandus, quiq; solvendus.* Euen thus *Peter Lombard*, distinguishing *Gods* way of *Binding* and *Loosing*, from the *Churches*, sayes, that *God* by himselfe remits sinnes, who cleanseth the Soule from all spots, and looseth it from the *Debt* of eternall *Damnation*: but he hath not granted this to his *Priests*; to whom notwithstanding, hee hath giuen power of *Binding and loosing*, that is, *of shewing men to be bound, or looſed.*

Hieron in Mat. 16.19.

Pet. Lombard. lib. 4. Diſt. 18.

Thus you may see, by how vniust a Title the *Church of Rome* would vsurpe a *Dominion* ouer mens Consciences (as she pretends a *Soueraignty* ouer the world;) ayming at *Supremacy* in all: Either wilfully, or ignorantly, mistaking our Sauiours Commission for *Binding* and *Loosing*: (as *Hierome* complaines,) *Istum locum Episcopi & Presbyteri non intelligentes, aliquid sibi de Pharisæorum*

Loco citato.

orum assumunt supercilio, &c.

Let me but mention to you likewise, vpon what slight pretences, they ground their *necessity of Auricular Confession*: cosening the ignorant people, with that smooth and plausible imposture, wherein they say the *Priest cannot remit sinnes, vnlesse he know them; and he cannot know them, vnlesse men will confesse them vnto him.* Then which *Proposition*, nothing can be more false. For the *Priest* may *Preach* and *Publish Remission*, or *Retention* of sinnes to those, whose faults he knowes not: And those men by a faithfull application of what they heare, may receiue the *Remission* of their sinnes, who neuer reuealed them to the Minister, but *confessed them vnto God alone. Sola enim cordis confessio, pœnitenti ad salutem animæ sufficit veraciter*: which way of *Confession*, is truely and onely necessary vnto *Saluation: I said I will confesse my sinnes vnto the Lord.*

Richardus à Sancto victore de Clauibus. Cap. 7.

But I vrge this point no farther: *Cassanders* temperate conclusion shall bring me off; I am of opinion (saith he) There had beene no Controversie about this point of *Confession*, had not some ignorant and importunate *Physitians* corrupted this wholesome *Medicine*, with their drugges of *Tradition. Est enim multis inutilibus traditiunculis infecta &c. quibus, conscientijs quas extricare & levare debebant, laqueos iniecerunt, & tanquam tormentis quibusdam excarnificârunt.* By which meanes they haue made it onely a *snare* to entangle and involue the simple; and an *Engine* to tor-

Cassand. Consult: Art. 11.

ment,

ment, not to ease the Conscience of those that seeke vnto them. We, for our parts, hold *Confession necessary*, though we lay *no necessity* vpon men *to confesse to the Priest*; nor doe we prohibit that in some cases. Nay, we account it an happy discharge of a troubled soule, to impart it selfe to the *Minister of Christ*, from whose lippes he may receiue such spirituall *Comforts*, as his *Office* can minister, and the *Scripture* allowes. Ever prouided, that this be left indifferent to the penitent, to doe, or not to doe, as he thinkes good; that it be not a constrained, but a voluntary Act; as *Danids* here, freely arising from his owne inclination; *I said I will confesse.*

The *Greeke* is, ἐξαγορεύσω κατ' ἐμοῦ, *I will declare or confesse against my selfe.* So that this *Act* is an *Accusation* rather then a *Confession.* 'Tis true, that euery *confession* of a sinne, is an *Inditement* of the Sinner; and yet is this such a kinde of tryall, as serues to acquire, not to condemne. *In Confessione, sui accusatio, Dei laudatio est.* In the course of our *Law*, the *Malefactors Confession* is the strongest *evidence*, and casts him without any other *Verdict*: but in *Gods Courts*, to *pleade guilty*, is the way to procure an *Absolution.* He that at the *Barre* of his owne *Conscience*, arraignes himselfe in this *world*, shall neuer be arraigned at the *Tribunall* of the *Great Judge*, in the next. *If wee would Judge our selues, wee should not be iudged.* *Dorotheus* writes of a deuout man, that being askt which was the best course to come vnto God, *replyed*,

Aug. Ser. 8. de Verb. Dom:

1 Cor. 11. 31.

orum assumunt supercilio, &c.

Let me but mention to you likewise, vpon what slight pretences, they ground their *necessity of Auricular Confession*: cosening the ignorant people, with that smooth and plausible imposture, wherein they say the *Priest cannot remit sinnes, vnlesse he know them; and he cannot know them, vnlesse men will confesse them vnto him.* Then which *Proposition*, nothing can be more false. For the *Priest* may *Preach* and *Publish Remission*, or *Retention* of sinnes to those, whose faults he knowes not: And those men by a faithfull application of what they heare, may receiue the *Remission* of their sinnes, who neuer reuealed them to the Minister, but *confessed them vnto God alone. Sola enim cordis confessio, pœnitenti ad salutem animæ sufficit veraciter*: which way of *Confession*, is truely and onely necessary vnto *Saluation: I said I will confesse my sinnes vnto the Lord.*

Richardus à Sancto victore de Clauibus. Cap. 7.

But I vrge this point no farther: *Cassanders* temperate conclusion shall bring me off; I am of opinion (saith he) There had beene no Controversie about this point of *Confession*, had not some ignorant and importunate *Physitians* corrupted this wholesome *Medicine*, with their drugges of *Tradition. Est enim multis invtilibus traditiunculis infecta &c. quibus, conscientijs quas extricare & levare debebant, laqueos iniecerunt, & tanquam tormentis quibusdam excarnificârunt.* By which meanes they haue made it onely a *snare* to entangle and involue the simple; and an *Engine* to tor-

Cassand. Consult: Art. 11:

ment,

ment, not to eaſe the Conſcience of thoſe that ſeeke vnto them. We, for our parts, hold *Confeſſion neceſſary*, though we lay *no neceſſity* vpon men *to confeſſe to the Prieſt*; nor doe we prohibit that in ſome caſes. Nay, we account it an happy diſcharge of a troubled ſoule, to impart it ſelfe to the *Miniſter of Chriſt*, from whoſe lippes he may receiue ſuch ſpirituall *Comforts*, as his *Office* can miniſter, and the *Scripture* allowes. Ever prouided, that this be left indifferent to the penitent, to doe, or not to doe, as he thinkes good; that it be not a conſtrained, but a voluntary Act; as *Danids* here, freely ariſing from his owne inclination; *I ſaid I will confeſſe.*

The *Greeke* is, ἐξομολογήσομαι κατ' ἐμοῦ, *I will declare or confeſſe againſt my ſelfe.* So that this *Act* is an *Accuſation* rather then a *Confeſſion.* 'Tis true, that euery *confeſſion* of a ſinne, is an *Inditement* of the Sinner; and yet is this ſuch a kinde of tryall, as ſerues to acquite, not to condemne. *In Confeſſione, ſui accuſatio, Dei laudatio eſt.* In the courſe of our *Law*, the *Malefactors Confeſſion* is the ſtrongeſt *evidence*, and caſts him without any other *Verdict*: but in *Gods Courts*, to *pleade guilty*, is the way to procure an *Abſolution.* He that at the *Barre* of his owne *Conſcience*, arraignes himſelfe in this *world*, ſhall neuer be arraigned at the *Tribunall* of the *Great Iudge*, in the next. *If wee would Iudge our ſelues, wee ſhould not be iudged.* *Dorotheus* writes of a deuout man, that being askt which was the beſt courſe to come vnto God, *replyed*,

Aug. Ser. 8. de Verb. Dom:

1 Cor. 11. 31.

Dorotheus Doctrin. 7.

ἐν πάσῃ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ, euer to accuse ones selfe. Let me therefore vse the *Prophet Esayes* words. Αἴ; σὺ τὰς ἀνομίας σου πρῶτος, ἵνα δικαιωθῇς; *Do thou first declare thine iniquities, that thou mayst be iustified.*

Esay 43. 26.

He bids thee be so early in the acknowledgement of thy faults, *Vt Ostendat tibi, quòd præuenire illum debeas, qui paratus est ad accusandum,* (saith *Origen*:) that thou maist prevent the *Deuill*, who is euer ready to accuse thee: *Præuentus enim Diabolus, vltra nos accusare non poterit, & si ipsi nostri simus accusatores, proficit nobis ad salutem*: In doing thus, wee disarme our old *Enemy*, and take away the *sting* of his malitious *accusations*, which haue no power to hurt vs: since by condemning our selues, we haue saued our selues. I end in *Saint Augustines* words, *Confitere quod tu feceisti in Deum, & confiteberis quid tibi fecerit Deus*. Confesse what thou hast done against God, and then thou shalt, to thy comfort, confesse, what God hath done for thee. Thou shalt haue cause with *Dauid*, thankefullie to commemorate Gods fauour, in a *Tu remisisti*, in the forgiuenesse of thy sinnes. *I said I will confesse my sinnes.*

Origen. Homil. 3. in Leuit.

Id.

Aug. in Psal. 29.

3 Sinnes.

Sinne is a *loud argument*: which if it want other tongues, will relate it selfe. Should a man bee silent, it would by guilty confessions, betray it selfe. *Sinne* is the worst secret that can be. I know no bosome where it is safe. There is no *creature*, no *element*, no *priuation*, *night*, nor *silence*, but is able to pursue, and detect a sinner: *---Serui vt taceant, iumenta loquentur*. Beasts haue a verdict to passe vpon wicked

Iuuenal.

wicked men; *A bird of the aire shall carry the voice, and tell the matter. Earth* will cry *Cain* guiltie, or if earth doe not, *Heauen will reueale the iniquity.* If both be silent, yet *the very stones out of the wall* (within which the sin was acted) *shall cry against him, and the beame out of the Tymber* (like a double witnes) *shall answere it.*

Ecclesiast. 10. 20. Gen. 4. 10. Ierem. 20. 27. Habac. 2. 10.

Doe not therefore flatter thy selfe, in the closenes of thy transgressions: What euer disguises night, complying with thy darke purposes, may put vpon thee; there is nothing can disguise thee from thy *Maker.* Canst thou be so stupified, so besotted in thy sinne, as to suppose, when other eyes behold thee not, God doth not? Thinkest thou, by drawing a *Curtaine* about thy *Bed*, or by putting out a *candle* in thy *Chamber*, to hide thine *incontinencie* from God, or darken his knowledge? Foole thou canst not! Thou beares a *Lampe* in thine owne breast, *thy conscience*; that is λύχνος (saith *Nilus*) *a watching Candle*, that burnes at midnight: and will light the *Iudge* to descry thee. Or if *that taper* burne dimmely, if it haue wasted into a snuffe, so that thou hast no Conscience, or but a seared one, which lies smothering in the socket; and can onely glimmer, not shine; why yet, God is (as *Basil:* saith) ὁλόφθαλμος, *all eye*, to suruey thee. Or if thy transgressions haue made *thee* so *loath'd* an *Obiect*, that he will not looke vpon thee; should he examine thy *cabinet friends*, vpon whose secrecy thou relyest, the *silence*, and the *darkenes* of the *night*; they would turne *Traytors*

Nilus Martyr. Parenes. 199.

Basil.

Leo ser. 5. de Quadrages.

to thee, and discouer them to him. *Cui obscura clarent, muta respondent, silentium confitetur.* Night would conuert it selfe into a *Noone*, and *Silence* proue a *speaking euidence* against thee. Since therefore thou canst lurke vnder no concealment, why doest thou not confesse that, which it is impossible for thee to hide? Why deferrest thou to resolue with *Dauid*, *I will confesse my sinnes*? If thou confesse not thy sinnes, they will confesse thee the greater sinner: And if thou wilt not owne them here, in a religious acknowledgment; they will owne thee hereafter, in a final Condemnation.

4. Their plurality; Sinnes.

This *plurall*, *sinnes* or *transgressions*, as it implies our many alliances to sinne, and the multiplicitie of our sinnes, *Actuall* and *Intentionall*: so it admonisheth vs, to confesse them all. God, as he is a *franck pardoner*, so he loues a *liberall confession*, wherein nothing should be kept back. Yet (not to perplex any man with the strict enumeration of euery crime as the Papists require) I confesse, the wilfull keeping back of sinnes, may be as dangerous, as *Ananias his deteining part of the price*; But for all that, thy condition is not damnable, (as Rome perswades) though thou hast forgot some sinnes which thou hast done, if so be thou slightest none of those which thou remembrest.

Act. 5. 3.

It is the *Doctrine* of the *Church of Rome*, that some *sinnes* are such diminutiues, such *Peccadillo's*, so *small*, so *veniall*, they are not worth a mention, nor doe they need a pardon; But doe not thou beleeue so. This negligent extenuation of faults, is

as

as pernicious a sinne as any. A presumption vnheard of amongst the *Fathers* of the *Primitiue Church*: Who (if we will credit *Dorotheus*) were wont to keepe a reckoning, *Tanquam ephemeriden Deo traditurí*: & to aske God pardon, for the very least and lightest offences, of which they were at any time conscious, ἀφίενται μοι τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐστι τῶν ἀνθρώπων. *Dauid* in this *Psalme*, in the preceding words, frees himselfe of all suspition of concealement, or palliation of his faults. *Mine iniquity I haue not hid.* And Psalme the 61. he summons all in a generall exhortation, *to powre out*, and empty *their soules before God.* Ἐκχέατε ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν, And because he would be sure not to be vnderstoood here short of his meaning, he puts *sinnes* in the *plurell*, which enwraps all, greater, and lesser. For so *Marlorat* in his *Ecclesiasticall Exposition*, renders the word *Præuaricationes*, Præuarications: which are not onely facts of malice, but collusions too: and may containe our intended sinnes, as well as committed: For so he explicates himselfe; *Dauid coram Deo se sistens, sensus omnes suos effudit.*

Wilt not thou confesse thy *riots*, as well as thy *Murthers*? the pollution of thy *thoughts*, as well as of thy *Actions*? *Christ* thy *Sauiour* suffered for both; he bled for both. Though thy *great sinnes* opened the wide *Riuer* in his *side*, and the *currēts* in his *hands* and *feete*: thy *smallest sinnes* scracht him in the *thornes*, which he wore vpon his head, or at least opened a *pore* in his *sacred Bodie*. For how

Suarez.

Dorotheus doctrin. 7.

Vers. 5. Psa. 61. 9.

Marlorat.

Esa.1.18. how knowest thou, but that, as he *bled* for thy *crimson sinnes* (as Esay calls them) through those larger wounds: so he *sweat bloud* for the sinnes of thy thoughts; that, as he suffered for *thy great offences* vpon the *Crosse*, so he suffered for thy *lesser crimes* in the *Garden*: that, as he did vndergoe a *publique passion* for the one; so he had an *antepassion* for the other in his *Agony*: that, as for thy foulest transgressions *he* became a *red Sea*, a true *Iordan*, a *sanguine Riuer* the head of which streame began at *Mount Caluary*; So before his *Ascent* thither, in a lower
Ioh.18.1. place, not farre from the *Brooke Cedron*, he suffered his body to become a Marish, when for thy sake the bloud wept out at euery Pore. Take heed therefore, how thou vnderrate st any sinne, since in the *Inuentory* of thy *Sauiours passion*, they were all rated; *He* dyed for all. And do not neglect those faults, which are the smallest in thy *Catalogue*. For euen that sinne which *whispers* now; and is only *peccatum susurrans*, carried about in a still report, and in the common fame, wounds and traduces thee but closelie; will in a litle time become *Peccatum clamans* a shrill and *crying sinne*. That which is now a *Grane* in weight, may proue a *Pound*; and that which was but a single fault at first, by an vnblest fæcundity may multiply into Sinnes. For *culpa culpã excutit*, one sinne is strooke out of another; like sparkes they conuey fire one to the other. Doe not suffer therefore the *Embers* of sinne, any loose thoughts, or vitious Imaginations, to lurke within thy bosome; least at length

those subterraneous fires breake out like *Ætna*, and burne thee in their hot *Flames*.

Minutæ guttæ pluuiæ, nonne flumina implent & domos deijciunt? Thou seest the raine which causes the land floud, at first onely distills in small drops, take heed then how thou letteſt any vice drop in vpon thy senses. If a temptation insinuate into thine eares, or onely beat in at the casements of thy eyes; those litle flawes, those cranies, if not stopt betimes, will make way for the ruine of the whole Fabrike. *Marcus Eremita* excellently saies, that *Sinne* is Δίκτυον πολύπλοκον, like a *subtile net*, consisting of *many foulds*: which if not warily avoided, will entangle the whole body. Whensoeuer therefore that *Fowler*, whose taske hath bin to *ensnare soules*, offers his *Net* at thee, seekes to fasten a small sinne vpon thee; quit thy selfe betimes, by a *Repentance*, and in a true *confession* discharge thy selfe of all thou knowest; euen to thy smalleſt trespasse. Remembring that wise saying in *Ecclesiasticus*; *Qui spernit modica, paulatim decidet*; *he that contemnes small faults shall fall insensiblie*. And to make this confession of thine more perfect, as thou acknowledgest the *Offence*, so acknowledge the *Offender*. *Qui rem non tacuerit, non tacebit authorem*. If thou confesse the *Fact*, and yet deny the *Author*; say thou hast sinned, but blame some others, as an *Occasion* or *Accessory* to thy sinne; thou do'st not then accuse thy selfe, but endite another; thou do'st not make a just *confession*, but by a *Recrimination* seeke to excuse thy selfe. *David*

Aug. citat. à Biel Lect. 32. de Missâ.

Biblioth. Patrum Gra Lat. To. 1.

Ecclesiastic. 19. 1.

Senec.

My sinnes!

here makes no such coy or faint confession; He doth not say onely *what was done*, but *who did it*: confesses a *Propriety*, & makes title to those sins, *My sins*.

We are all naturally prone to transfer our sins vpon others. *Adam* cries, *The woman which thou gauest me*. And *Gabriel Biel* mentions some, that vsed to blame the *Planets* which raigned at their *Nativities*, for the sinnes vnto which they were enclined. If they had *ill dispositions*, *Saturne* was in fault; if they were *Theeues*, *Mercurie* made them so; if *incontinent*, and amorous *Venus* was to be blam'd, not they. A folly worthy of no refutation, but laughter, did I not see it possessed some in that high nature, that they do not onely accuse the *Influences of Heauen*, but pronounce *God* himselfe, who gaue *motion* to those starres, as the *Author of their sinne*. Most strange and fearefull illusion! that any should imagine *God a Plotter* for *Damnation*; that *he* should combine with the Deuill to supplant soules; that *he* should make a *Prison*, and then make *Offenders* for that prison; that *he* should build a *Hell*, and cause men to sin, that they might be condemned vnto that *place of Torment*. O farre be the thought of this from our hearts! *Let God be glorified and all men reputed blasphemous Lyers*, that speake or imagine thus: Let vs say with the *Psalmist*: *I haue sinned, and I alone*; and in these words acknowledge, *I will confesse against my selfe*, those sinnes which I haue committed against thee; resting vpon that excellent conclusion of *Fulgentius*, *Non potest esse illius*

Gen. 3. 12.

Lect. 72. de Missa.

Psal. 51. 4.

Author, cuius est actor. It is impossible that God should be an *Agent* in sinne, whose office is to *auenge* sinne, and to punish the sinner. For if thou say, or thinke otherwise, thou wilt proue a *deuill* to thy *God*; slander and accuse him to his face of sinne, who is the *Confessor* to receiue the acknowledgement of thy sinne; *The Lord. I said I will confesse my sinnes vnto the Lord.* Fulgent.

6. Vnto the Lord.

VVe take a liberty to tell *God* those things which for shame we dare not communicate vnto men, *Multi quod scire homine nolunt, Deo narrant* (saith *Seneca.*) He spake in the worst sense; 'tis true in the best. We need not be ashamed to discouer our *selues*, our *Actions*, our *Thoughts*, to *God*; who, *as he delights not in the death of a sinner, so neither glories he in the shame of a sinner.* When we shrift our selues to men, we aduenture our credits vpon their secrecy, and confesse to our owne disadvantage, since it is in their power to betray vs.

If the *Conclaue* of *Cardinals* would haue suffered S. *Chrysostomes* Caueat to haue bin entered amongst them, they neuer would in the *Laterane Councell* haue decreed a *necessity of Auricular Confession*: nor in the *Trent Councell* haue established that former Decree. *Take heed how thou tellest thy defects to a man*, (saith *Chrysostom*) *least he cast thee in the teeth with them*: and in the very next words he flatly prohibits the necessity of such *priuate confession*, leading our meditations vpon the scope of this text.

Concil. Trident. Sess. 4. can. 5.

Homil. 4. de Lazaro.

Thou art not to confesse to thy fellow seruant,

Chrysostom. ib.

uant, least he may divulge it, but to him that is thy Lord, that careth for thy soule; to him, that is most mild and curteous; to him, that is thy Physitian. I said, I will confesse my sinnes vnto the Lord.

But doth God need an informer? Did he not know *David's* sinne before his confession? or cannot he know mine, vnlesse I tell him? Yes surely, he knew them before: But he knew them as my *Iudge*, not as my *Confessor*: He knew them, but not that way which most delighteth *him*, and is best for me, in a repentance: In a word *he* knew them before, but he knew them to my *Condemnation*: He knew them not to my *Comfort*, so as to *forgiue them*; till *he* receiued them from mine owne mouth; *I said, I will confesse my sinnes, and thou forgauest.*

2 Part. I. Thou forgauest.

Like the tidings of *release* vnto a *Captiue*, or a *reprieue* vnto a *condemned man*: so is the sound of this word *Tu remisisti*, thou forgauest. *It is the sauour of life vnto life*; a reuiuing or recouery from the death of the soule, Sinne; and an earnest of a *new life*, both in the *Body* and the *Soule*, in the *new Ierusalem*. 'Tis the *voice of the Turtle*, the true language of the *Gospell* deriued from his lippes, that left the blessing of *his peace* vpon all, that loue the *Peace* of his *Church*; that *legend* of *mercy*, which *Christ* commanded his Apostles to divulge in all parts of the world, *for the remission of sinnes*. This was the end of Christs comming into the world, *to saue sinners*, his owne peculiar worke; who a-

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lone as he hath the *property* to haue mercy, ſo hath he the ſole *power to forgiue*, *Quis poteſt peccata dimittere niſi ſolus Deus?* Marc. 2. 7.

That the *Church* hath a power to remit ſinnes alſo is true in a ſubordinate ſenſe; that is a *Miniſteriall*, a *Declaratory* power, as our *Liturgie* fully expreſſes it; *and hath giuen power and commandement to his Miniſters, to Declare and Pronounce to his people being penitent, the Abſolution and remiſſion of their ſinnes, &c.* But he hath giuen them no *Iudiciary* or *Authoritatiue* power, to pardon abſolutely of themſelues. This is *Gods prerogatiue, he* alone doth that act; the *Church* but reports it: *he* ſignes the deed; the *Church* as a witnes teſtifies it: *he* hath the originall power to abſolue, the *Church* hath power, not to diſpence, but to *pronounce* his *abſolution*; *he* grantes and ſeales the pardon; the *Church* conveyes and publiſhes it: *he* hath the poſſeſſion, the true inheritance as of the Throne, ſo of the keyes of *Dauid*; the *Church* hath but the vſe, and cuſtody of thoſe keyes: by which ſhe *opens* and *ſhuts*, yet not at her owne pleaſure, as if ſhe could hang *new locks* where ſhe liſted, or make *new dores* for ſinners to goe out at, but with a limitation: Shee muſt not preſume to goe farther, then thoſe *Keyes* lead her: So many roomes as Chriſt hath opened by thoſe keyes, ſhe may opē, or ſhe may ſhut. The *Miniſters* who are his *Dorekeepers* ſhould take too much vpō them, if they ſhould preſume beyond this. Miſtake me not, I doe not in any ſenſe of diminution call the Miniſters *Dorekeepers*,

pers, as if I would inferre their office determined at the Church-doore? No, their keyes open farther then so; and by vertue of them they may goe as high, as *Gods Presence Chamber*, the Church there; to receiue and to deliuer his messages to his people; to signifie his pleasure to them, either for the *Remission*, or *Retaining of their sinnes*; but beyond this their keyes will not lead them. They cannot open *Gods Priuy Chamber*, where all his *secret Counsells*, his Acts of *mercy* or of *iudgement*, of Pardon or Condemnation are concluded; this is accessible to none, but God himselfe. They are not able with any key in their bunche, to open that doore. And if by violence they shall attempt to breake it open, as the *Successors* of *Peter* haue done for many yeares, sitting there as *Counsellours* ioyn'd in Commission with God, nay *sitting in Gods* (saith *S. Paul*) to *condemne* or to *absolue* like him; let them know, in this they haue committed a Riot, not lesse then *Lucifers*; and their aspiring insolence must expect a *Precipitation* as violent and deepe as his.

2 Thess. 2. 4.

I haue almost lost my selfe in this Labyrinth of *Papall vsurpation*; I retrait to my text in *S. Ambrose* his words; who hath briefly stated and limited the *Power* of *Priests Absolution*. In the forgiuenesse of sinnes (saith he) men vse their *Ministery*; but exercise no right of any *Authoritie*: men *aske*, and men *pronounce*; but the *Deity graunts*, *Tu remisisti*, *Thou forgauest*.

Which speech doth not onely intimate his

Power,

Power, but his *readines* to forgiue. See in what a forward terme *Dauid* expresses *Gods* alacrity and propension to mercy, setting it downe in the Preterperfect tense, *since thou hast forgiuen*; as a thing past in graunt, before the suit was commenced. *Seneca* spake it of the Court, *Iudicia illorum præcipites, beneficia lenta sunt*. They were prone and speedy to doe injuries, but their benefits came slowlie from them, and with difficulty: 'Tis otherwise with *God*, he is of no *slacke* Power, nor doth he forslow his fauours to mankind, seeking to put a price vpon them by delay. *God is not slow as some slacke concerning his promise*, saith S. *Peter*: Or if he be slow, he is *slow to nothing but to wrath* only. In that Act, which was the swiftest execution of his vengeance, the *Flood*, howsoeuer them that suddaine Inundation surprised the World, came vpon it vnawares, *whilst they were eating and drinking*; (as our *Sauiour* saith) yet when it was done, *He is sorrie*. Though he *repented he had made man*, and from that repentance put on a resolution to destroy him; Yet after his destruction he relents into *mercy*, he is sorry he had demolished and annihilated his creature by water, though most deservedly; and then makes a *Promise* and *Couenant*, neuer to *destroy him so againe*. Did he not giue *Abraham* leaue to dispute, and argue *Sodom's* reprieue, to plead a *Pardon* for it, after his sentence was past, and the Executioner ready to giue fire? Yet for all that, he heard him out, till he had said all he could say; till he had made all his *Abatements*,

Ioh. 3. 4.

Psal. 85. 10.

2 Pet. 3. 9.

Psal. 86. 15.

Mat. 24. 38.

Gen. 9. 15.

Gen. 18.

from *Fiftie* euen to the laſt *Ten*. And when he ſate downe before *Niniveh*, and had beleaguered it with his Iudgements; yet you ſee he giues them
Ion.3.4. faire Quarter, *Fourty Dayes* to parley, and to make their Compoſition with *Him*. Nay he al-
Pſal.95.10. lowed Rebellious *Iſrael* Fourty yeares; *Fourty yeares long was I grieued with this generation*: ſo ſlow is he to wrath, ſo loath to execute his vengeance.

And yet He is not ſo ſlow to puniſh, but he is by many degrees ſwifter to ſhew mercy, and to
Ambroſ. forgiue: *Neſcit tarda molimina ſpiritus ſancti gratia* (ſaith S. *Ambroſe*) He that knowes all things, is ignorant only of wayes to delay his Mercies; which are as inſtant as his worke was in the firſt Creation, *Said* and *Done* at once. How doe his winged bleſſings out-flie our ſuites? chiding our ſluggiſhnes; in that no diligence we can vſe is able to keepe pace with him; nor our earlieſt importunity ſpeedy enough to ouertake his bounty: who giues oftner then we can aske, and more then we haue capacity to apprehend. 'Tis not enough, that he tarry till we come vnto *him*, vnleſſe he preuent vs by comming vnto vs, ere we ſet out: that he ſuſpends his bleſſings till we ſeeke him, vnleſſe he firſt ſeeke and call vpon vs, as he did vpon
1 King.19.9. *Eliah*. *What doeſt thou here Eliah?* that he ſtay till our petitions wooe him, vnles his favours firſt ſollicite vs, and giue vs cauſe to thanke him, not to aske. He thinkes his *goodnes* hath no aduantage, no victory ouer our neceſſities, if he ſhould onely

heare

heare vs when we call; vnles, as he propheſſes by his Prophet *Eſay*, *Antequam clametis ego exaudio*, he begin to vs, and *make our anſweare before we ſpeake*. He thinkes his *mercy* would proue tardy, if it expected our ſuit; vnles he granted it before our *motion*. Therefore in the 2 *Sam:* 12. when *Nathan* admoniſhes *Dauid* of two great ſinnes; he no ſooner in a religious humiliation deiects himſelfe crying, *He had offended*; but the Prophet ſpeedily raiſes him with the comfortable tidings of his *Abſolution*; and in ſuch a Phraſe, as if *God* had *antedated* the pardon, before the ſinne was committed. For he tells him *the Lord hath alſo put away thy ſinne*. Not he *will*, or *does*, but already he *hath* put away thy ſinne. You may perceiue a gratious haſt too in the remiſſion of his ſinne in this place: he but *confeſſes* and God *forgiues* him; nay (ſaith S. *Auſtin*) he makes *no confeſſion*, but a promiſe onely; *Non iam pronunciat, ſed promittit ſe pronunciaturum, & ille iam dimittit*. *He ſayes he will confeſſe*, and vpon that promiſe, God immediatly grants him a large pardon. *Tu remiſiſti*, *Thou forgaueſt the iniquity of my ſinne*.

Eſa. 65. 24.

2 Sam. 12. 13.

2. The iniquity of my ſin.

The *extent* of his *grace* is as large, as vnlimitted, as his *mercy* is ſudden. *God* as he is no ſlow, dilatory God: ſo neither is he a ſparing cloſe-handed God; as he doth not ſuſpend his fauours, or hang long in the deliberation of his pardon to ſinners: ſo neither doth he giue them in a lame, imperfect faſhion; but large, and full, and ample as is *himſelfe*. *In quo omnis plenitudo* who is the ſpring

of all bounty.

He doth not *veniam dimidiare*, distribute his mercy by halfes, keepe men betwixt life and death, panting betwixt hopes and feares, as if he shou'd send a pardon, when the prisoner is halfe hanged; no, *Non de dimidiâ, sed perfectâ remissione hic differit Propheta.* Marlorat.

God doth not lease his pardons for life onely, adiourning the short punishment in this world, with a purpose to inflict it *eternally* in the next. His hand is not so scant, *non arctatur, non claditur fine, nullas habet metas Diuina clementia* (saith *Bernard.*) Bernard. And *Hierome* in his translation, dates this *remission* with a *semper* to signifie the duration, the continuance of it, which is as long, and lasting, as his *goodnes* that hath none end.

Nor yet doth he remit the *Eternall* punishment and retaine a *Temporall* to be paid in this world, in an imposed *pilgrimage*, or a *purgatory* hereafter: *Non solum excluditur satisfactio sed Purgatorium*, boldly saith a writer. Therefore one of our English Translations reads, *Thou forgauest the punishment of my sinne.*

Let those then that list to be abused, *commute* or *fine* for their release at *Rome*, suffer the Pope to pare their saluation, and take fees out of *Gods* Pardons, which he bestowes freely; we will receiue our *Absolution* neerer hand, and lesse wasted in the carriage: *Let our Israel trust in the Lord, for with the Lord there is mercie, and with him is plenteous Redemption: Copiosa Redemptio* a boun-

Psal. 130. 7.

teous

teous remission; for he shall wipe out *all our sins*, neither take vengeance on vs in this life, nor in the life to come.

If he do lay a crosse, a calamity vpon vs in this life, as he did vpon *Dauid*, for the scandall he brought vpon *Israel* by *Vriahs* death, and the adulterating of his wife; afflict vs, as he did him in *the losse of a child*; or send a *Pestilence* to scoure the land, as he did his; In which sense *Euthymius* sayes of him, *Mors remissa est, sed noxa vel damnum exigebatur per subsecutas calamitates:* Yet for all this, *God* doth not inflict this, *Sub ratione pœnæ*, as a *vengeance*, but a *chastisement*; not as a *punishment*, but a *fatherly Correction*; not as a *Minister* of his *wrath*, but an *euidence* of his *loue*. *For he chasteneth the Children, whom he best loues.* And so you see he corrects the bitternes of his Iudgements, with intermingling mercy amongst them; *Pellit pestem à peste*, (saith one) he takes out all malignity from his iudgements; (as S. *Paul* saith) he pluckt out the sting of death. *O mors vbi aculeus tuus?*

2 Sam. 12. 14.

Euthymius in Psal. 32.

1 Cor. 15. 55.

Last of all, he doth not onely *remit the punishment* of the sinne, and reteine the *Guilt*, treasuring vp that *in diem iræ*, to presse against vs in the last day: but he *forgiues* that too; he doth not quench the flame, and leaue a sparke behind to kindle his wrath, or to incense him hereafter; no, *Tu remisisti iniquitatem peccati mei*, *Thou forgauest the* very *iniquity of my sinne*, the *enormity*, the *Obliquity* (as *Aquinas* calls it;) So that *Intempestiua*

tempestiua est hîc Pœnæ *&* Culpæ *distinctio*, that distinction of the *punishment* and of the *guilt* is *friuolous* and out of season here: *God* forgiues the sinne at the very roote. And as *Elisha*, when he cured the waters, *cast salt into the springs*: so *God* to make a perfect cure by his *Absolution*, heales vs at the *heart*; because that is the roote of sinne. ἀφῆκας ἀνομίαν τῆς καρδίας, saith the *Septuagint*; *thou forgauest the iniquity, the impurity of my heart.*

a King.2.21.

Thus you may perceiue, there are no Arrerages left in Gods Audit; he forgiues both the *Guilt* of the sin, & *the punishment*; both the suit & the damages. for he requires nothing but a true confession: *If we confesse, he is faithfull and iust to forgiue vs.* This makes a full expiation and attonement for all our sinnes. Therefore he that *confesses* and *repents*, as it were *Leuies a fine with God*, to cut off all punishment in the present, or in the world to come. For this *Remisisti*, is* *remisisti in æternum*, our euerlasting *quietus est*; a generall *acquittance*, for the breadth and extent of it like his *mercy*, which is *exceeding broad*, exceeding large; and againe like vnto his *mercie* for the *duration* and *date* of it which *endureth for euer.*

b Ioh.1.9.

* Chaldæa Paraphras.

I am at my fartheſt, euen lost and confounded in the vast subiect of Gods *mercy*; which like *a deepe sea*, through which I cannot wade, stops my passage; so that here I can onely stand vpon the banck, and cry with S. Paul, *O altitudo, O the depth of his mercy.*

In which deuout extasie I will end; onely borrowing

rowing a ſhort *Gloria Patri*, and ſome ſounds, like thoſe which environ the *mercy Seat*, from the Prophet *Dauids* ſong of thankſgiuing. *My ſoule praiſe thou the Lord, and forget not all his benefits: which forgiueth all thy ſinnes, and healeth all thine infirmties; which redeemeth thy life from the graue, and crowneth thee with mercie and compaſſion.* To this *glorious God, full of compaſſion*, who crowneth vs here with *mercy*, & will crowne vs hereafter with *glory*, be aſcribed all *honour* and *thankſgiuing* for euer. *Amen.*

Pſal.103.2.3.4.

V.8.

rowing about Gloria Patri, and home towards
the throne which environ the mercy seat, from the
Prophet Davids song of thanksgiving. Magnifie Psal. 103. 1. 2.
praise thou the Lord, and forget not all his benefits:
which forgiveth all thy sinnes, and healeth all thine
infirmities: which redeemeth thy life from the
grave and crowneth thee with mercie and com-
passion. To this glorious God, shall of vers. V. 4.
passion, who crowneth us here with
mercy, & will crowne us here-
after with glory, be all ascri-
bed all honour and
thanksgiving
for ever.
Amen.

DAVIDS STRAIT.

THE AFTER-NOONES SERMON VPON THE ACT SVNDAY.

Deliuered by IOHN KING,
Inceptor in Diuinity, one
of the Præbendaries
of Christ-church.
in *Oxford*.

PSAL. 71. 20.

Thou which hast shewed me great, and sore troubles, shalt quicken mee againe, &c.

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PSAL. 71.20.
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shalt quicken me again, &c.

DAVID'S STRAIT.

2 Sam: 24.14.

And Dauid *ſaid vnto* Gad, *I am in a great ſtrait: Let vs fall now into the hand of the Lord (for his mercies are great) and let mee not fall into the hand of man.*

THat *Caution* giuen heretofore by the *Cryer*, to thoſe that were to ſpeak at *Athens*, that they ſhould preſently fall to their matter Ἄνευ προοιμίων καὶ παθῶν, without *Preface* or *Paſſion*; ſhall ſerue me for a *Preface* to to my enſuing diſcourſe. My ſubject being ſo full of *ſtraitnes*, if I would hold proportion with it, will not giue me the libertie of a larger introduction. Yet before I take the words aſunder, you muſt take along with you, ſome *Præcognita*, ſome *preſuppoſitions*, by which you may looke back from my *Text*, to the beginning of this Chapter, and haue therein a briefe *Epitome* of the *Hiſtory* here contained. *Iſrael* had againe provoked the Lord to anger, not-

Connexion.

withstanding his former chastisements for their sinnes. Now sinne seldome goes without some punishment attending on it. God was in their debt,
V.1. *and againe his anger was kindled against them.* In this anger, he permits *Dauid* their King to add his sinne to theirs; and so to fill vp the measure and number of their transgressions, by his own, in numbring the people vnnecessarily and vnlawfully. *Dauid* commands and preuailes against *Ioab* and the *Princes*, that gainesayed it at the first; but afterwards, lest they should loose his fauour, they execute his commands. His sinne was 9 moneths and odd dayes old, before he saw it: and the Lord let him see the deformitie of it, at this growth, by some visitation different from the great pestilence he afterwards offered him; as some collect out of 1 Chron. 27.24. whereupon he recall'd *Ioab*, (*he finished not the numbring, because there fell wrath for it against Israel.*) His owne heart hereupon smote him first, & he acknowledged his folly: & presently *Gad* his *Seer* was sent to let him know, that God would also smite him for this follie: yet with such a mercifull hand, that *Dauid* might conceiue, it was rather for *discipline*, then *destruction*, and vpon as easie termes as might stād with his justice. Strike he would; yet so, that *Dauid* should prescribe in what kinde: whether by *famine*, *sword*, or *pestilence*. And although these conditions seeme hard on *man's* part, who is the *delinquent*, because they are all rather to be avoided, then chosen: yet they are easie and moderate, on *God* the *Iudges* part: who needed

not

not to haue giuen any at all. Nay any one of them, or all at once, and thousands more, he might without injustice haue inflicted. Therefore *Dauid* thought himselfe mercifully dealt with, and vpon his second wiser thoughts, professeth as much in my text. *Dixit autem David ad Gad: Coarctor, &c.*

The *Text* you see is *Responsorie*; and the *Speakers Dauid* and *Gad*. *Gad* had deliuered his message; and it was now *Dauid's* turne, being instantly vrg'd to it, to giue him an answere. Here it is specified, to whom, and by whom, and what it was. So that you may consider here the *Words of the Historian*. *And Dauid said vnto Gad*. and the *words of the Historie*, in the rest. The words of him that compiled this booke, and his words that are here recorded, the words of King *Dauid*. The former shew the *connexion*, and the distinction of persons, and the *Forme* onely: these latter present vnto vs the *Substance* and *matter of the Annals*. *Diuision.*

In the *words of the Historian*, though they are onely ὑγρὸς ἀκολουθίας, I shall make some short *obseruations* about the *Persons of Dauid and Gad*, and some other circumstances. *In the words of the Historie*, which make vp *Dauid's* answere, there is 1. *His Deliberatiõ, I am in a great strait*. 2 *His Resolution*, and this twofold: *Positiue, Let vs fall now into the hand of the Lord*: with a *Reason*, for *His mercies are great*. *Negatiue* or *Exclusiue*, and *let mee not fall into the hand of man*. According to this order, your patience and attention is desired: First to *Subdiuision.*

1. Generall part. The words of the Hiſtorian.

the words of the *Hiſtorian*, the *Penman of the holy Ghoſt*: *Dixit autem Dauid ad Gad.*

Dauid is here the *Delinquent*, arraigned a little before, v. 12. but by none of his glorious titles: as they are giuen him in the precedent chap. v. 1. *The anointed of the God of Iacob: the ſweet Pſalmiſt of Iſrael*, &c. But as the *Lord* inſtructed *Gad*, *Goe and ſay vnto Dauid*: *plaine Dauid.* It was the *King* when he commanded *Ioab*, to goe and number the people: but it is now *Dauid*, when he is convented and vnder diſcipline. But whether we haue him by the *title of the King*, we are ſure it is *the Perſon of the King*. And when *Great ones* ſinne, they commonly doe it, according to the eminencie of their place, with authority, with a high hand. In this particular the *King* would ſatiſfie his curioſitie, & that meerely, in hauing the ſumme of the people taken;

V. 2. *Vt ſciam*, *that I may know the number of the people.* A knowledge *vnfruitfull* at the beſt, and ſauouring of *infidelity* alſo; being he had a promiſe from the Lord, that his people ſhould be as the *ſtarres* for number, or the *ſands* on the ſea ſhore. Yet he was ſo tranſported with this humor, that ſay what *Ioab* and all the *Captaines* would, the *King's word prevailed. Quod libet, licet.* There needes no other warrant to juſtifie great *Potentates* bad actions, but their *will.* Barre them of this libertie, or rather licentiouſnes, this were to ſtreighten their Dominions. For *greatnes* for the moſt part ſweyes more with them then *goodnes.* Therefore when at any time this goes to curbe or oppoſe that, they will preſently

preſently ſhake hands with virtue, and baniſh out of their actions *Optimus*, ſo they may but retaine *Maximus* in their titles. Let a ſuit be neuer ſo vniuſt, yet if it be commenc'd in *a great man's name*, it were his diſgrace to take the foile in it. *In magnis magnæ fortunæ bonis ponunt vlticnem.* No *Court of iuſtice* but ſhall ring of his *iniuſtice*; and whatſoeuer his reputation be with God, what cares he, ſo he may but keep his reputation amongſt men. The ground of all is this. Thoſe *Mighties* of the earth, that harbour an *vnmaſtered Appetite*, an *vnrulie will* in their boſomes, and are wedded to it, vnleſſe they haue from aboue, a ſpeciall *reſtraining* and directing *Grace*, ſhall euer finde it ſuggeſting to them as *Iezebel* to her husband *Ahab* (when he was ſad becauſe he might not haue *Naboth's vineyard*) *Doſt thou now gouerne Iſrael? Ariſe and be merry, I will giue thee the vineyard.* And ſhe carried it with the *Kings letter* and *ſeale*, though the lines were, like *Draco's Lawes*, written in *Naboth's blood*.

Sen. l. 3. de irâ, c. 4.

1 King. 21. 7.

But doe the ſinnes of *Princes* keepe within their owne private threſhold's? It were well, if ſo: Nay, they are of a diffuſiue, and ſpreading nature; to the hurt of others alſo: either by *Imitation*, or *Imputation*. How by *Imitation* is evident enough. *Quo grandius nomen, eo grandius ſcandalum.* *The vices of Rulers* are made the *rules of vices* to inferiors. And as they are ſooneſt diſcerned in eminent *perſons*; ſo are they ſooneſt followed from their *examples*. *Plato's* crump-ſhoulder, and *Ariſtotles* liſping, and *Portius Latro's* ſallow complexion, made

Bern.

ſects of their *imperfections*, as wel as their *opinions*. And neuer was there a wider gate ſet open to all villanie, then when *Iupiter*, *Mercurie*, and *Venus*, and the reſt of that rabble of *Heathen Gods*, were made the *Authors* aud *Actors* of wickednes.

The *Romaniſts* are but litle behinde the *Heathẽs*, in ſome of their *Canoniz'd Saints*. And if *ſtabbing*, *maſſacring*, *blowing vp*, and the like *vertues*, for which they are *deified*, bring to Heauen; the Lord keepe vs all from that Heauen, which theſe deſerue. Did not theſe *Politicians* perceiue, that many times, the *perſons of men* haue a greater attractiue vertue to their ſuperſtition, then their ſtrongeſt *perſwaſions*: they would not ſo often attempt *to raiſe vp children to their Father the Pope*, out of our deceaſed *Orthodox Prelates* & *Profeſſors* of beſt note. They would certainly ere this haue recall'd that *Lying Legacy*; *Legatum Peregrè miſſum mentiendi cauſâ:* which of late the *enuious man* ſowed vpon ſtall's and ſhop-boardes in this place, and elſewhere in gardens and orchards, *whil ſt men ſlept*. But the *Authour* hath long ſince bequeathed himſelfe with his *Legacie*, to notable *Impoſture*, and frontles *Impudence*; In which I leaue him; who I preſume made that the *Motiue* to ſet forth his *Motiues*, in an aſſumed *perſon* and *name*: as well knowing that the greatnes of *Ieroboams* place, makes his name draw a long *traine* after it, when he is mention'd in the holy Scripture. *Ieroboam who did ſinne, and who made Iſrael to ſinne.*

1 King. 14. 16.

Neither doth this obſervation hold onely in the higheſt

higheſt *Offices*, but alſo in the higheſt *Graces*. A *Pagan life* may ſuit well with a *Pagan profeſſion*; but *ſub nomine Chriſtiano vitam agere Gentilem*. If the life and actions of a *Pagan* lurke vnder the maske and viſor of a *Chriſtian name*, the bad example may poſſeſſe very many. Χριστιανοὶ χρηστιανοὶ, ſaith *Iuſtine Martyr*, from the *Heathens* owne mouthes: and therefore *goodnes* was expected from the very name. Let them looke to anſwere for it, that anſwere not that name.

Hieron.

Ἐκ τῶν παπαγρυμῶν ὑμῶν ὀνόματος, χρηστότητι ὑπαρχόμεν. *Apol. 2. pro Chriſtian.*

Among *Chriſtians* alſo, the ſinnes of the *Clergie* doe farre ſooner and more dangerouſly infect then the ſame in the *Laitie*. And their *offences* are reckoned according to the *meaſure of the Sanctuary*, double to the ordinary account; ſo ſhall their *puniſhments* be too. Onely in paying *Tithes*, that *double honour* due to them, which the Apoſtle ſpeakes of, men are content to reduce to *ſingle pay*. To *both* I ſay onely this: *majus peccatum habent*. And I would we did not giue the occaſion. I would it were not too juſtly taken vp by way of *complaint*, that *Holy Orders* of the *Church*, and *Degrees* of the *Schooles*, do too often inveſt many; who are more guiltie of being *Corrupters* then *Leaders* (vnles it be in the worſt ſenſe, ſuch as the *Phariſees* were, *blinde Leaders of the blinde, and both fall into the pit*, a *Taverne* or a *Tap-houſe*.) May we not feare, that theſe are the laſt and worſt times, when ſome that ſhould be the *Heads* of the people, are become the worſt *Members*? We haue loſt the *diſtinction* of *Degrees*, ſince there hath bin

bin brought in a *Confuſion* of *ill Manners*. And the *higheſt Graduat's* are ſcarcely to be diſcerned by any other *Habit*, then a *Habit of vice*; that dares obtrude and iuſtifie to the face of *Authority*, the moſt malapert miſdemeanour, becauſe it is ----*facinus maioris Abollæ*. Iuv.

Miſtake me not. I *defile* not my owne *neſt*: but would let ſtrangers knowe (for I am not ignorant how we are taxed abroad) if any ſuch *rowſt amõgſt vs*, they are *not of vs*. But I haue ſtoup't to thoſe, that are farre inferior to *King* David; yet to ſuch as haue ſinned ἐπὶ τῷ ὁμοιώματι τῆς παραβάσεως, *after the ſimilitude of his trangreſſion*; not for the *matter* of it, but the *danger*. Though ſome may aske what danger here from this particular ſinne of *King* David? who was moued by it to doe the like? Ro. 5. 14.

But ſay nothing were to be feared from the *Imitation* of this his offence, there was eminent perill from the *Imputation* of it, to no leſſe then *70000. men*: that partly for this were cut off by the *ſword of the Lord, even the Peſtilence*. So true is that of the *Poets* oftentimes.--*Delirant Reges plectuntur Achivi*. It is not the leaſt puniſhment to a common-wealth, when *Princes* and *Rulers* tranſgreſſe the *Royall Lawe*. They neither ſtand nor fall to themſelues alone. *I will giue children to be their Princes*, ſaith the Lord, by way of commination vpon *Iudah* & *Ieruſalem*. Such a *child was* David here, who in his *old age* did *childiſhly*, and the people ſmarted for it. *Facit regnare hominem Hypocritam propter peccata populi*. So the *Vulgar* read it. V. 15. Iſa. 3. 4. Iob 34. 30.

it. Our laſt *Engliſh* with a litle difference: *That the Hypocrite raigne not, leaſt the people be enſnared.* Both looke one way, that the *ſubjects* haue the worſt it, whē the *gonernors* are bad which the *Lord* ſets ouer them.

Neither are the waies of the Lord herein vnæquall, to inflict any thing vpon the *members* of a *Politique body*, though the *Head* were in fault; more then if the *Iudge* ſhould doe wrong, in making the *back* pay for the theft which the hand committed: It is *Iuſt: Martyrs* compariſon: ſuch a *vnion* there is betweene the *Prince* and the *people*. *Reſp.138.ad Orthodox.*

What euill the people of *Iſrael* had here done, it will not much profit vs to know: but in the generall, this we may be aſſured of. *The Soule that ſinneth, it ſhall dye.* *God* ſtrikes not an innocent partie: and therfore we muſt be perſwaded with *St Aug:* whenſoeuer and how ſoever he viſits, *occulta eſſe poſſunt iudicia dei, iniuſta nunquam.* As for *King David* did hee not thinke yee, beare his owne burden? Did not the hand of the Lord finde him out, as well as the people? If wee beleeue *Greg:* and *Iuſt. Martyr*, hee had his ſhare of puniſhment, though in another kind. *Ira ſæviens, quæ corporaliter populum perculit, rectorem quoq; populi intimo cordis dolore proſtravit.* The people were ſtricken *outwardly* with the *Peſtilence*; the *King inwardly* with *ſorrow*, that his tranſgreſſion ſhould draw, after it, the loſſe of ſo many ſubiects, * Σαλοι γαρ ἐϛὶ τῆς βασιλείας, ἡ μείωσις τῶν βασιλευομένων. That Kingdome muſt needes be much *ſhaken*, where the number

Ezek.18.

Greg.mor. li.25. cap.14.

Iuſt.Mar. ibid.

number of the ſubiects is *ſhortened*: and it is πικρὰ τὴν τιμωρίαν ἡμαξιπποτων βασιλέων. Elſe *King David* would never haue wiſhed ſomuch hurt to thoſe ſo neere him. *Let thine hand be againſt me, & againſt my Fathers houſe.*

Ver. 17.

But this diminution of the people, might bee more tolerable to *King David*, becauſe it came not vpon him *as a theiſe in the night*, ſuddainely, without any *præmonition*. The *Lord* ſent one of his *Prophets riſing vp early* to giue him notice of his purpoſe. And *Dauid* was *early vp* alſo, either to goe to heare the word of the Lord, or to haue it come home to him. *For when David was vp in the morning*, inſtructions came from the *Lord to Gad* to repaire to him.

Ver. 11.

A thing it ſeemes not ſo rare in thoſe daies, as now, for *great Perſonages* to *riſe early*; eſpecially vpon ſuch an *occaſion*, to heare a *Prophet* or a *Preacher*. This were fitt for *meaner ſoules*: but *Great ones* will keepe their ſtate towards God himſelfe. *They lie vpon beds of Ivorie and ſtretch themſelues vpon their couches*, and that even till *Noone day* many times: not with *fewer ſinnes* then *David*, but with *ſmaller ſenſe* of them, with *greater ſecuritie*; and therefore the greater danger. The *gentle voice* of a *prophet* will not be ſufficient to rowſe or ſtartle ſuch from their eaſe, but it muſt bee the *voice of thunder*; and then perhaps they would be glad, with *Caligula*, to leaue their beds, and creepe vnder them, for affrightment.

Amos 6. 4.

It is likely *David* ſlept but little that night. For he had

had within him the *alarme* of a troubled *conſcience* ſtill beating. *Percuſſit cor David eum.* He puniſhed himſelfe with numbring the houres, or rather the foure watches of the night, for his numbring the people. And we may beleeue, that this night among the reſt, *he watered his couch with teares*, and ſpent the better part of it, in meditations and confeſſions of his folly. Then (and not til then) when he had *his eyes* thus open vpõ his own tranſgreſſions, was his *Seer*, *the Prophet Gad*, ſent in the morning. which is an argument of the *Lords* ſingular *benignity*, who vſeth not to ſend his *Prophets*, but either to *invite* ſinners to *repentance*, or to *confirme* them that haue begunne it (as *Dauid here did*) in ſo good and acceptable a worke. Ver. 10. Pſ. 6. 6.

And for what are his denunciations and threatnings added to his meſſages, but to ſett an edge as it were vpon our turning to him; to be as prickes and goades, to make vs the more eager to deſire that wee may decline them. Thus was *Iſaiah* ſent to *King Hezekiah*; to bid him *ſet his houſe in order*. Thus alſo was *Ionah* ſent to *Nineveh*. *Yet 40 daies and Niniveh ſhall be ouerthrown.* And in my *Text* (that I may not multiplie examples) *Gad vnto* David. That *Avenger* beares no hoſtile mind, who giues warning to his *Aduerſarie*, where and how he intendes to wound him. And that partie muſt be very negligent of his owne ſafetie, who laboures not either to guard, or to prevent the blowe hee ſees comming. The Lord therefore herein dealt with *David* (and *David* Iſa. 3. 8. Ion. 3. 4.

made that good vse of a *præmonition*) as sometime he did with *Abraham*, when he intended to de-
Gen. 18.17. stroy *Sodom*, *shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I doe?* to the end that *Abraham* might make *intercession* for *Sodom*, and *Dauid* for *himselfe* and *his people*, as we reade both of them did; and we may goe and doe the like. For this farther fa-vour holy *Dauid* found in the sight of the Lord, that hee sent the *same prophet* the second time, who at the first was a *messenger of death*, to be a *director* and a *counsailor* to him, and the pænitent
1. Chron. 21. 16. *Elders, who were clad in sackcloth, and fell vpon their faces*, what course they should take, to stay the hand of the *Angell* from striking, and to stopp the iawes of death. It was *Gad* which came to him *both times*. To shew, that he who is the *minister* of the *Law*, should be the *minister* of the *Gospell* also: as he *breakes*, so he should *bind* vp againe. An obseruation which I make the rather, against those *indiscrete Teachers*, that speak still frõ *mount Sinai*, in *thunder & lightening*: not at all from *mount Sion*, *in* the mild *tones* of *mercy*. They are
Mar. 3. 17. like those *Boanerges*, *sonnes of thunder* calling downe *fire from heauen*, and calling it vpp *from hell* too, to affright distressed consciences; but
Act. 4. 36. they haue no portion of the *spirit of Barnabas*, *to be the sonnes of consolation*. Thus are they farre more terrible Instructers, then the *Law itselfe*.
Gal. 3, 24. For *Lex pædagogus*, *ad Christum*: But these bring not their *Auditors* so farre on their way. They only shewe the *Law* holding out the *rod* vnto them,

as

as their *adverſarie*; but they ſhew not how they muſt *agree with this adverſarie in the way*, (that is) *in Chriſt*, who hath ſtil'd himſelfe *the way*, the *mediating way* betweene God and men, who hath taken away the *curſe* of the *Law*.

But there is *another extreme*, as much to be avoyded by thoſe that will take the *prophet Gad* for their patterne. As they may not powre into wounded conſciences altogether *vineger*: ſo ought they not to vſe nothing but *oyle* to ſmooth and ſupple. That ſame, *oleum impinguans caput*, *pretious oyle that breakes the head*, *is farre* more dangerous then the *friendly ſmiting of the righteous by reproofe*. And that *pretious oyle* of *palpable flatterie*, or *ſilent conniuence*, is too often vſed, to the hurt of thoſe that are the *heads of the people*. But *Gad* was armed from aboue with boldnes; and feared not the face of the beſt man, to acquaint him with the worſt of his meſſage. He durſt come home to the *King's bed-chamber*, and tell him that which might make his *eares tingle*. And happy are thoſe *Princes* and *Nobles*, before whom ſuch *Prophets* dare diſcharge that part of their *thankleſſe office*. Pſ. 141. 5.

Gad was ſaid to be *Davids Seer*; becauſe he ſaw that which was hidden from *David*, till he revealed it to him. *Kings* in their *affaires of ſtate*, are forc'd to ſee many things through other mens eies; but in their *ſpirituall ſtate*, they haue more need of their *Seers eyes*, by which they may looke vpon both their *ſinnes* and *puniſhments*. Now *Davids Seer* was no other then *Davids Chaplaine*, ſaith

Pet. Martyr; but of a farre different ſtraine from thoſe *Trencher Chaplaines* of *Great men* in our times; whoſe office conſiſts chiefly in *reading prayers* and *ſaying grace*. As for their *preaching*, vnles they *ſpeake placentia*, they were better keepe in their words. Their *Patrones* haue a *curbe* for their mouthes, by which they are able χαλιναγωγῆσαι to rule both their tongues, and their whole bodies.

Iam. 3. 2.

Num. 24. 13. And as *Balaam* ſaid to *Balak*, *They can not goe beyond the commandement of their Lords, to doe either good or euill after their owne mindes, but muſt only ſpeake, what they haue put into their mouthes.* If they exceed this *commiſſion*, they muſt expect no other then to be degraded from the honour of ſitting at the lower end of the *Table*. But there are enough of *Ieroboams Preiſts, of the loweſt of the people*; that will be ready enough to take their roomes. Many a *Micah* gets him ſuch *a Leuite* (but I am ſory ſo many *ſuch Levites to* the diſgrace of our *Miniſterie*, and *Vniuerſities*, are to be found) *for ten ſhekels of ſilver by the yeare, a ſuit of apparell* and *his victualls*; and then vaunts, as *Micah did. Now know I that the Lord will doe me good, ſeeing I haue a Levite in my houſe.* But ſuch a *Seer* as *Gad*, that knowes the *dignitie* of his *office*, and diſcharges *the duty* of it, boldly and freely, ſhall ſtay for præferment, till he hath learn'd better māners, then to tell his betters any thing they would be loath to heare. Yet *King David* here kept a better temper towards his *Seer*. It was but a harſh meſſage that *Gad* brought him; you haue your

1 King 13. 33.

Iud. 17.

choyce

choyce, of *ſword, peſtilence or famine:* all ſo full of horrour, that they might ſeeme not onely to perplex, but withall to exaſperate *David* againſt his perſon, that was to conuey ſuch an vnwelcome option: (as we vſe to maligne a Bayliue, that ſerues vs with a *ſub pœnâ*, or other *citation* to the barre.) But the King laid his owne guiltines againſt the *Prophets* words: and his *godly ſorrow* for his errour, wrought in him St *Paules* ἀγανάκτησιν, κὶ ἐκδίκησιν, *indignation* and *reuenge* againſt himſelfe, not againſt the Prophet. Therefore he neither excuſes, nor extenuates, nor juſtifies his fault, nor falls fowle vpon *Gad*, as *Ahab* did vpon *Eliah*. *Art thou he that troubleſt Iſrael?* nor puts him in durance to try whether his words wou'd come to paſſe; as the ſame *Ahab* vſed the *Prophet Michaiah*. But contrary to the ordinary deportment of thoſe that are faultie, who are commonly *Monitoribus aſperi*; the *Mountaines* and *high-ones* eſpecially, that will *ſmoake* and reake and fret, & fume, when they are toucht neere the quicke, *Tange montes & fumigabunt*. It is onely, *Dixit David ad Gad*. *Dauid ſaid*, and he *ſaid mildly*, he did not ſtorme, nor ſweare, nor raue: and he *ſaid to the purpoſe*, to the matter that was in hand, punctually and preciſely, in anſwere to that which *Gad* propoſed before, *Coarctor &c. I am in a great ſtrait*. And ſo are we fallen vpon my 2^d *Generall*: *The words of the Hiſtorie* it ſelfe: and therein, First *Dauid's Deliberation, I am in a great ſtrait*.

2 Cor. 7. 11.

1 King 18. 17.

1 King 22. 72.

Pſ. 144. 5.

2 Generall part. The words of the Hiſtorie. Dau. Deliberation.

This ſtraitning proceeded from *Gads propoſall* in

in the precedent verſe. One of the 3. muſt come, but it was in Davids choyce. Either *7. yeares famine*, or 3. *moneths flight in perſecution*, or 3. *dayes the fury of the* Peſtilence. Theſe are the 3. *chain'd iudgements* of the *Lord*, that goe for the moſt part link't together in the holy Scripture. They are his 3. *arrowes*, which he vſually drawes out of his quiuer, to ſhoote at the children of men; like thoſe 3. which *Ionathan* ſhot, to be *Hieroglyphikes* to *David*, of his ſafetie or danger. But we will take no warning, neither by thoſe, he hath ſhot *beyond vs* in the times paſt: nor by thoſe that fall *ſhort of vs* in neighbouring countries: nay ſcarcely now, when they euen *hit vs*, and ſticke in our owne borders and boſomes. Thus you ſhall finde them joyn'd like inſeparable companions in a league of vengeance as it were. *Ye would not proclaime a liberty euery one to his brother, ſaith the Lord. Therefore behold I proclaime a liberty for you, to the Sword, to the* Peſtilence *and to the Famine.* So alſo *Ier.* 29.17. and many places of that Prophecie. and Ezech: 14. 21. Theſe are 3. of thoſe which the *Lord* cals there *Quatuor iudicia peſſima*, his 4. *ſore iudgements*. and Tertull: calls them *Tonſuras inſoleſcentis generis humani*, lopping, & *pruning* of proud mankind, that it growe not too ranke.

1. Sam. 20.

Ier. 34. 17.

L. de animâ c. 4.

Had *David* bin confin'd in his choyce onely to one of theſe, it had beene no *election*. They are but *mock-elections*, or rather *approbations* onely, when *Titius* is abſolutely deſign'd to ſuch, or ſuch a

place

place: yet vnder colour, the choice is devolued vpon *Sempronius* and his *associates*, in whose power it is not left to refuse. There must be somewhat taken and somewhat left, which cannot be in vnity, but necessarily requires variety of 2. at the least. Yet such was the variety here presented to *David*: all euills of punishment, all harbingers for death, but vnder diuerse shapes: all distastfull to flesh and bloud, that it wonderfully poses and puzzles him vpon which he should determine. And *variety* of obiects distracts euen *in good things*. We haue St *Paules* συνέχομαι, *strait betweene two, and which to choose, he knew not*. He saw it was so happy for his owne good to be with *Christ*, yet so needfull for the good of others to haue his dissolution differd. We may commonly obserue there are the worst stomacks at the best furnisht tables. When it is *Cœna dubia*, the *Guests* knowe not what to tast first, and so omit all, hauing full eies, but empty panches. Thus also are many *Students* more pos'd with the multitude of bookes, then the difficultie of their matter. The *Authors of Methode* are so numerous, that they become to some the *Authors of Confusion*, who cannot discerne amongst so many pathes, what tract is best to follow. It was therefore a iudicious obseruation of a graue *professour*, (though it may seeme a *Paradoxe* in our *Vniversities*,) that our *rich Libraries*, made but *meane Scholars*. Vpon this ground: because either out of their greedines of knowledge, and inconstant curiositie, they will *tast* of all *Authors*, and

Phil. 1. 23.

Sen. Eccles. 12. 12.

and *digeſt* none, for *varia lectio delectat, certa prodeſt:* or oppreſſed with ſuch variety (*becauſe much reading is wearines to the fleſh*) and they thinke it too long a taske for ſo ſhort a life, to turne ouer ſo much as the *Indexes* of all, they growe oſcitant, & will peruſe none. This is like the turning off a *Greyhound* at the whole *Heard*: where his game is ſo plentifull, and he hath ſo many in chaſe, that he pinches none.

Now where there is *variety*, but all *are mala culpæ*, the diuerſe *waies on the right hand and the left, that lead to deſtruction*, the *number* may admit of election, but not *the matter*. Though all ſinnes be not æquall, yet all are æqually to be avoyded and declined. For there are ſome things of that nature, that a man muſt not yeeld to, though the *Rack*, or other moſt exquiſite *torments* ſhould be vſed, to extort his conſent. Therefore it was a noble reſolution of one of the *Princes of Condee*, to whom the *French King Charles the* 9th made this offer, and bid him make his choice; whether he would heare a *Maſſe*, or ſuffer preſēt *death*, or perpetuall *Impriſonment*. He was as ſuddaine, as religious and zealous in his anſwere, *Primum Deo juuante nunquam eligam. As to the firſt, I deteſt the Idolatrous Maſſe: and for the other 2. I leaue them and my ſelfe to the will of the King; yet hope the Lord will order and diſpoſe theſe alſo to the beſt.* With ſuch courage did that *mother*, happy in the number and conſtancie of her 7. *children*, chooſe rather to vndergoe all torments, then to prolong

2. Macc: 7.

their

their liues by eating ſwines fleſh. And the feruent zeale of *Shadrach, Meſhach* and *Abednego*, for the true and liuing Lord, burn't within them, ſo much hotter then the fierie fornace, *Nebuchadnezzar* threatned them with; that his *golden image* wanted worſhip from them, and himſelfe wanted their obediẽce in his vnlawfull commands: *Non oportet nos hâc de re reſpondere: We are not carefull to anſwere thee in this matter.* For in all ſuch caſes, we are to hold that *principle*, out of which *Peter* and *Iohn* framed their *anſwere* to the *Iewes*. *Whether it be right in the ſight of God, to hearken vnto you, more then vnto God, iudge yee.* We may not hearken to *men* nor *Angells*; nor ſuffer *freinds* to haue any intereſt in vs, but with ſubordination to the Lawes of *God*. Δεῖ μὴ συμπράττειν φίλοις, ἀλλα μοχθεῖν ἑαυτῶν. Nay we muſt not hearken to *our ſelues*, when our owne luſts would tempt vs, and drawe vs away from the *Lord*, though they whiſper in our eares, neuer ſo many apparant goods, that may accrue vnto vs, for our priuate ends and commodities. But in theſe, *what ſtrait* can there be, where it is εὐρύχωρος ἡ ὁδὸς: *the broad way*, into which we ſhould not ſo much as *enter our foote*, our affections, our ſenſitiue appetite, which are the feet, as it were, and the inferior part of our ſoules?

There are ſome, that put themſelues vpon ſtraits, where there are none: ſuch as with thoſe *fooliſh Galatians*, are *bewitched* to make queſtion of the well ſettled truth, and to perplexe themſelues, whether they are in the truth or no, and to call *Father Leſ-*

Dan. 3: 16.

Act. 4. 19.

Matt. 7. 13.

Gal. 3.

sius into *consultation* with them; *quæ fides capessenda*, whether they should more safely liue still *Protestants*, or be reconciled to the *Church* of *Rome*, and dye *Papists*. I may vse to them the words of *Eliah*, vpon the like occasiõ, *Vsq; quò claudicatis? How long halt yee betweene two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him*; and follow him there, where he is *worshipped as God, in spirit and truth*, without that *will-worship* of carnall, delightfull, pompous ceremonies; which through the eyes of the simpler sort steale away their hearts, to beleeue any thing which is impos'd vpon them. *Follow him there*, where he is still *a God*, and nothing detracted or derogated frõ him. Where true *Faith*, and *good workes* as the fruits of faith are preached, yet *no merit* pleaded in either. Where thou art taught, that thou *doest but thy duetie*, and receiuest *aboue thy reward*. Where *Christ's satisfaction* is thought to be so full, for the couering of all thy sinnes, that it needes not to be peiced out with any of thine owne, to help the *scantines* of it. But on the other side, *if Baal be God*, or God be in that part of the *Baalitish religion*, that teaches me to fall downe before *stockes* and *stones*, that are so much my *inferiours*, because insensible, and my selfe in doing so, degenerate, and become as insensible as they: or that teaches me to *adore* my *equals* and *fellow seruants*, *Angels* or *Saints*: or that teaches me to *nullifie* him that is so much *aboue me*, to *eat my God*, (nay to giue this priuiledge to a *mouse*, that shal nibble at the Sacramẽtal bread) to deface his Image there, with my *Cannibal-*

1. King. 18. 21.

like

like teeth, *crucifying him as it were afresh*: againe to deface his Image *in the King*, with a murtherous *Assasinate's* hand, or in a bloudie and treacherous heart: I say, if God be in such *superstition*, or rather *sacrilege*, or such a *seditious sect*, *follow him there*.

There is also another straine of *strait-lac'd brethren*, that thinke the comelie *garments* of our *Church*, are too full and flaring, and come too neere the *meretricious attire of the Whore of Babylon*: & therefore they are in a strait, whether they should reach their consciences so farre, as to a *conformity* and *subscription*; or suffer a *proscription*, or suspension, or deprivation to passe vpon them. But *Dauid* did not vnnecessarily put himselfe vpon any such straites as these. In things absolutelie *euill*, or in things *indifferent*, he might soone haue quitted himselfe of all distraction and anxietie of minde. But here, there was an inevitable necessitie, of choosing one of the three, which were all *mala pœnæ*. As the *Angell* tooke *Balaam* in a narrow place, where *he could not turne to the right hãd or the left*. Num. 23. 26.

But you will aske mee, *what choyce* can be of those things, of which there can be *no desire*? And who euer hated himselfe so much, that he should haue any inclination to vndergoe his *punishment*? Here then must that *Vulgar Maxime* take place; *E malis minimum*. If I must needes smart, that which is least painfull, is most welcome. I would rather be chastised with *whips*, then (as *Rehoboam* threatned) with *scorpions*. And our great *Master Aristotle*, could answere, that the lighter and more tollerable

1. King. 12. 11.

lerable euils compared with the greater, haue the semblance and appearance of good, and therefore may he the obiects of election. *Plerumq; genus mortis, in alterius mortis consideratione, levamen est.* So did *Dauid* in his resolution, cast himselfe *into the hands of the Lord, rather then into the hands of men*; As thinking it his best and safest way: For the *Vulgar translation* reades it *comparatiuely*. *Melius est vt incidam, &c. it is better for me to fall into the hand of the Lord, &c.* Although he would by his good will haue escaped the hands of both.

Greg. L. 8. ep. cap: 41.

2. Secondly, these *three punishments*, proposed to *King Dauid*, howsoeuer no way pleasing to flesh & bloud (*for no chastening for the present seemeth to be ioyous, but grieuous*, saith the *Apostle*) yet because they belonged to the *discipline*, which the Lord vseth ouer men, and were *workes* of his *iustice*, therefore in themselues *good*; and good for vs also, whensoeuer the Lord inflicts any such vpon vs, had we that good consideration of them, which this *Kingly Prophet* else-where professeth. *Bonum mihi quia humiliatus: It is good for me that I haue beene afflicted, that I might learne thy statutes:* amongst which, this is one: *Statutum omnibus semel mori.* It is *a pœnall statute*, enacted by that *high court of Parliament*, which *made man*, that *death* & the accomitants thereof, should be the *wages of sinne which man made.*

Hebr. 12. 11.

Ps: 119. 71.

Hebr. 9. 27.

Ro: 6. 23.

And I pray obserue here the *deceitfullnes of sin*. It promises *freedome* and liberty, but concludes vs in a *prison*, *in litle ease*. *Dauids heart* was pric-

ked

ked at first, & puffed vp with a desire of vaine knowledge, but in the end his *heart smote him* for it. Thus hath sinne, before it be cõmitted, a comely visage to allure vnto it, like those *Locusts, with mens faces & womens haire, but a taile like a Scorpion & a sting* in it; that is, *in the end, anguish* and anxietie. And *Abaddon the King of the Locusts there*, is ready to suggest vnto vs with his temptations, that *God is mercifull and long suffering*, so to make vs runne into *præsumption*: but afterwards he is as ready to driue vs vpon the rocke of *despaire*. He labours to keepe from vs the *still voyce*, wherein *God* is a *God of mercie*, with the lowd noise of *blustring windes* and *earthquakes, and fire*; still sounding in our eares terrour and iudgement. *Tribulation and anguish vpon euery Soule that doth euill.* These are *dangerous straites*, when, as in a peece of *prospectiue*, the neerer the eye, the broader doe things appeare, but the farther off they are represented, the more contracted: so when the longer we looke vpon our sinnes, the greater strait, the greater perplexity shewes it selfe. When we cannot see the end of those *feares*, that drawe all our *hopes* of pardon *narrower* and narrower, till they leaue us in the end, in the disconsolate thoughts of *blacknes and vtter darkenes*, where there is no glimpse of of light to be seene. But on the contrary, if it be, as we see in a *calme water*, when a stone, or the like, is cast in to mooue it, it makes a small and narrow entrance, but from that impression, the circles are multiplied bigger and bigger, till they come to the

Reu. 9. 8.

Re: 2. 9.

the bankes: ſo, if among ſt all thoſe *contractions* of heart, and *diſtractions* too, vnto which our ſinnes haue brought vs; when the *waters come vp euen vnto our ſoules* ---- *Et vnda ſuperuenit vndæ*: and hemme vs in on euery ſide, we can but perceiue a *dilatation* and extenſion of *mercie*, one mercie ouertaking another, and our hearts enlarged in the apprehenſion of thoſe mercies: If when we paſſe here, through the *red ſea* of many tribulations, where the path is narrow and dangerous, we can but ſee the *land of Promiſe*, a broad and ſpacious and pleaſant place to entertaine vs, at our iorneys end; we may be aſſured that this is the *way of ſaluation*. For στενὴ ἡ πύλη, *ſtrait is the gate*, and *narrow is the way which leadeth to æternall life*: ſtrait and narrow in the beginning, but faire and capacious the farther we project our ſight. Straitnes for a ſhort time, for a moment: but the largenes and vncircumſcribed freedome of ioy, ſhall know no limits of time, but endure for all eternity. Not only, as the *ſweet ſinger of Iſrael* praies, *Make vs glad according to the daies, wherein thou haſt afflicted vs, and the yeares wherein we haue ſeene euill*: but without and beyond all compariſon with former times, *gladnes for euer*. *No ſorrow, no crying, no paine, no ſtraitnes, God ſhall wipe away all teares from all eyes*. Who ſees not that it is a farre more bleſſed thing, *to goe on our way weeping here*, which, a'though we tread vpon thornes, and with much difficultie get through, brings vs to a cæleſtiall *Paradiſe*; then to walke in a *broad way, ſtrewed*

Mat. 7. 14.

Pſ. 90. 15.

Rev. 21. 4.

Pſ. 126. 6.

with

with *roses* and other delicacies, to destruction and the place of torment: like the *foole* in the *Prou. that goes laughing to the stockes.*

Certainly *King David* was in a better estate, when his way was thus *hedged vp with thornes, that he could not readily find his pathes*, then when he walked at libertie vpon his *tarras*; from whence he had so pleasant & free a prospect vpon a *faire woman*, that it gaue occasion of that foule sinne with *the wife of Vriah.* (*Mulier longè, libido propè.*) a sinne so foule, that it cloudes and ouershadowes all the rest he committed; as if he had beene innocent in other transgressions. *He turned not aside saue only in the matter of Vriah the Hittite.* When *Nathan* was sent to him for that, and *Gad* for this, he called himselfe to a *strict account*, and imitated that part of the *Serpents wisdome*: who drawes herselfe through a *narrow place*, that she may put off her *old skinne.* Such wisedome was *David* brought vnto by these *straits*, to *strip* himselfe of his former folly, to *put off the old man by repentance*, which is μετάνοια, & *Resipiscentia*, an *after wisdome.* And from him may we take a patterne, though wee cannot bee *innocent as doues*, yet in this manner, *to be wise as serpents.* Nevertheless in his *straites* he found the *Libertie of the sonnes of God*; That I may vse the Apostles words. *He was troubled on every side, but not distressed*, ἀπορούμενοι, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐξαπορούμενοι. *perplexed but not in despaire.* For his *Resolution* in the next words was cleere, and free from perturbation. *Let vs fall now into the hands*

Hos. 2. 6.

2. Sam. 11.
Aug. in Ps. 50.

1. King. 15. 5.

2. Cor. 4. 8.

2
Dauids RESOLVTION.

1 Positiue.

of the Lord &c. Therein first consider the *positiue Part* & the *Reason* annexed, and you shall find in it that same εὐβουλία, his singular dexteritie in aduising and counsailing himselfe for the best, in so difficult a case, which is the infallible *child of eminent wisedome.*

2. For first, knowing himselfe to be guiltie of the punishments proposed to him, he declines them not; nor complaines of the seueritie of them; nor prayes to haue them differed, or diverted from him; but readily accepts of that which he accounted the mildest of the three, *Incidā in manus Domini.* Whereas otherwise wisedome dictates to the innocent, not to draw so much suspicion vpon themselues, as voluntarilie to vndergoe what they deserue not.

2. Secondly obserue, how in his election he makes the circumstances of the *punishment*, fitly answere to the circumstances of the *transgression*, like *Elisha* vpon the *Shunammites child*, he applyes *mouth to mouth, eyes to eyes, & hands to hands, & stretches the one vpon the other.*

2 King. 4.

Pride was the *mother of his sinne*; and in my *Text* their is a *fall for that. Incidamus, a posture of humiliation*, he desires to be *humbled vnder the mighty hand of* God.

Againe this pride and *glorying* of his, was in the *number of his subiects:* Therefore he thought it but iust & agreeable to the *law of Retaliation* which the *Lord* holds: *Per quæ quis peccat, per ea punitur*; that he should *suffer by number*; not by the increase but

the

the diminution of that number, he ſo much vaunted of. According to that: *In the multitude of people is the Kings honour; but in the want of people is the deſtruction of the prince.* For *Pagnine, Arias Montanus, Iunius, & Tremellius* read it *plurally*, as we in our *laſt Engliſh* tranſlate it, *Incidamus. Let vs fall.* Prou. 13.28.

And this intimates with all, his *impartiallity* even to himſelfe and his owne houſe. He would not lay *a greivous burden of puniſhment vpon his peoples ſhoulders* (as our *Saviour* taxes the *Lawyers*) *and himſelfe not touchit with one of his fingers*; but ſubmits himſelfe to hold æquall proportion with the loweſt of his people, who partly drew it all vpon their heads. And *Ioſephus* is of opinion, that for *this reaſon* he choſe the *Peſtilence* (howſoeuer we haue another expreſſed in the Text, from the *Lords mercies*) Becauſe had it beene a *Famine*, he might haue made proviſion before hand againſt that. Had it beene the *Enemies invaſion*, he might hauh ſecured himſelfe in his *Forts & ſtrong holds.* But the *Plague* is the *Lords beſome of deſtruction*, which may *ſweepe* away the *King* as ſoone as the *Peaſant*; and therefore *Incidamus, Let vs fall, I with the reſt.* I exempt not my ſelfe from the *common calamitie.* Lu. 11.46.

Yet their is a *particle more*, which I may not omit. It is good to ſee the bottome of a danger at the firſt, and to know the continuance of it. A long and lingring expectation of the worſt that may befall, perplexes more oftentimes, then if it

came vpon vs presently. The *shape of death* represented to our *phantasies*, is more terrible, then the *experience* of it to the *sense*. But when we know the heat of an affliction will be soone past over, it addes comfort and courage and resolution to the patients, who hope for release, at the expiration of that short time. It was *King Davids discretion* here, since he could not resolue, which was the *most greivous*, to choose that which was *least tedious*. He cast with himselfe, that he had but *three daies* to reckon vpon, for the furie of the *pestilence*: wheras he must haue told many long and irksome *houres* in the *seaven yeares famine*; or but the *three moneths pursuite of his enimies*; and therefore he makes it his *request* to the *Lord*, as the *sonne of David* hastens *Iudas* in his trecherous designe, that he might instantly enter vpon his *passion*, ὃ ποιεῖς, ποίησον τάχιον. *Let vs now fall into the hand of the Lord. Now presently*, without further delay.

Ioh.13.27.

And he had his wish: for *immediatly the Lord sent a pestilence vpon Israel, from the morning* (that very morning in which *Gad & he* had this conference) *even to the time appointed*. Which *appointed time*; whither it were onely ἕως ὥρας ἀρίστου, from the morning till *dinner time*, as the *Septuagint* render it, and *Theodoret* and S^t. *Ambrose* follow that opinion: or till the time of the *continuall evening sacrifice*: (so the *Chaldee Paraphase* explaines it, and S^t. *Hierome* and other moderne interpreters:) or till the *time* that *David*

Ver.15.

Qu.37. in 2 Reg.
In Psal.37.

sacri-

ſacrificed vpon Araunahs threſhing flowre; or till the *whole three dayes* in the letter of the *Scripture*, were expired; I may not ſtād to diſcuſſe. But it is very probable, that *David* was in hope, by the reaſon he giues of his choyce, (*Multæ miſericordiæ Domini*;) that the Lord in his great mercie, might contract and *ſhorten*, euen that *ſhort time of three dayes*.

But before I come to recount thoſe conſolations and advantages which *Dauid* forecaſt, by falling into the hand of the Lord; I muſt explicate the *terme*, what is meant here *by the hand of the Lord*. Some thinke that *Dauid* excepted onely againſt the *Sword of the Enemie*, *the hand of man*, and left it to the diſpoſition of the *Almighty*, to inflict either *the Peſtilence*, *or Famine*: which come both more immediatly from the *hand of the Lord*. Or that he did determinately make choice of the *Peſtilence*, but in ſome other words, which are not expreſſed in the text; as if it could not be euinced ſufficiētly out of the text: yet, that he muſt fixe vpō; becauſe the *Prophet Gad*, vrg'd him ſtill to a definite anſwere. *Chooſe thee one of them, that I may doe it vnto thee*. So *Toſtatus* inferres. But ſome *later Commentators*, could ſee a *determinate choice* of the *Peſtilence*, in the very *Phraſe* of *the hand of the Lord*, here vſed. For in many other places of holy writ, *this* is more peculiarly call'd *the hand of the Lord*. As *Exod. 9. 3. Behold the Hand of the Lord is vpon thy cattell* &c. *and* v. 15. *I will ſtrech forth my hand that I may ſmite thee and thy people with* V. 12. & 13.

Peſtilence. So alſo we finde it *Ier.* 21. 5. 6. *I my ſelfe will fight againſt you, manu extentâ, with an outſtretched hand, and ſmite the inhabitants, they ſhall die of a great Peſtilence.* And thus doth the *Prophet Habb:* deſcribe the awfull Matie of God. *He had hornes comming out of his hand* what were thoſe? *Before him went the Peſtilence, and burning coales (or burning diſeaſes) went forth at his feet.* Nay. 1 *Chron.* 21. 12. there is a *ſword* put into the *hand of the Lord. Gladius Domini & Peſtilentia, the Sword of the Lord euen the Peſtilence.* For albeit all the *creatures* are as *armes* and inſtruments of vengeance in *the hand of the Lord* (the *ſtarres in their courſes fought againſt Siſera: Fire* came downe from heauen at *Eliah's praiers:* the *Earth* ſwallowed vp *Core* and his complices: *Beares* devoured the 42 *children*, in *Bethel*, that mock't *Eliſha*) yet where we cannot diſcerne the *hand of nature, nor the hand of man*, as in the Peſtilence; of which we cannot giue any *naturall cauſe*, neither can *humane counſailes* or remedies preuent, or remoue it (and ſuch was this here, which after ſo ſtrange a manner, and in ſo ſhort a ſpace, ſwept away ſo many thouſands, as *Ioſephus* excellently deſcribes it,) there we attribute it to a *ſupreame & ſpirituall and inuiſible cauſe, to the hand, or ſword of the Lord.* As thoſe *Magicians* before *Pharaoh*, when their Art failed them in producing *lice*, were forc'd to acknowledge, *Digitus Dei eſt hic.* Thus did *Dauid* make his choice of the *Peſtilence*, agreeable to that denunciation of the *Lord*; where it is intima-

Hab: 3. 4.

Iud. 5. 20.

7° Antiq: c. 10

Exod. 8. 19.

Exod. 30. 12.

intimated, that if they did not pay the *halfe ſhekell* there commanded, at the taking the ſumme of the people, there ſhould come a *plague* vpon them. And the *Rabbins*(though it be but a fond, and too ſubtile a conceite of theirs)affirme that *Gad* prõpted *Dauid* to this particular choice: and according to his miniſteriall function, help'd to extricate him out of his perplexity; in that, at the end of the præcedent verſe, where Gad bids him, *aduiſe and ſee what anſwere I ſhall returne:* In the *Hebrew* it is דבר *Dabar, quod verbum*: from whence commeth דבר *Deber*, which ſignifies the *Peſtilence*, and is the word vſed both before and after my text. But without the helpe of ſuch vaine curioſities, *Dauids refuſall* of the *Famine*, and the *Sword*, may be both implied in the *negatiue part of his reſolution: non in manus hominum*. Becauſe many times there may be a *Famine* cauſed by the *helpe of man*; when neither *the Heauens are made iron, nor the Earth braſſe vnto vs*. As when the enemies ſet fire on the fruits of the land, which was *Sampſons ſtratagem* with *foxes* & *firebrandes* to burne the *Philiſtimes* corne. Or whẽ they cut off the *conuoies* & block vp a beleaguered towne, ſo that it cannot take in, new prouiſions: (which is the *new militarie diſcipline* of theſe times, when by *breaking the ſtaff of bread, and cauſing cleannes of teeth*, the enemies prevaile more, then by their owne courage and force of armes.) Or elſe, when in times of *peace and plentie*, our great *Corne-maſters* will make a *dearth*, by hoording vp their graine, that they may the better enhance

enhance the price of it. Suffering the bowells of the poore to be emptie, while their ſtore-houſes are full; and with a pittiles eye beholding their needy brethren, whil'ſt they cannot but knowe, that miſe and ratts and other vermine revell in their garners. There are other waies, in which the *hand of man* may concurre to a *famine*. Therefore *David* refuſing thoſe two, vnder *that phraſe*, ſubmits himſelfe here to the *Peſtilence*, by ſubmitting himſelfe *to the hand of the Lord*. And of the *Lord alone*; that he would viſit immediatly, without deputing or ſubſtituting any vnmercifull creatures to that worke of vengeance. For he is facile and exorable, *ſlow to conceiue a wrath*, and loath to execute it, when it is conceiued, in rigor and ſtrictnes. *For his mercies are great*. Which is the ſtrong *Inducement* and *Reaſon* of *Dauids* choice, to caſt himſelfe vpon the Lord. And obſerue his emphaticall expreſſions. He doth not ſay *mercie*, but *mercies* in the *plurall*, more then one. Not *few mercies* but *many* mercies: nor *many litle*, but *many* and *great mercies*: nor there a ſtoppe; but πολλοὶ σφόδρα, *very many* in their *number*, *very great* in their *dimenſions*. Nay they are not onely many and great, but οἰκτιρμοὶ, *very many*, *great*, *and tender mercies*; as the *Septuagint* well render the *Originall*; (Not by ἔλεος;) The very *bowells* of *motherly compaſſion*; for which the *Evangeliſt's* oftimes uſe, σπλάγχνα, and σπλαγχνίζεσθαι.

Reaſon of Dav. choyce.

His *mercies* are extended according to the extenſion of all our *miſeries*; and elevated according

to

to the elevation of our ſinnes. Be they neuer ſo many, neuer ſo weightie, yet the *mercies of the Lord are ouer all his workes*, and ouer all thoſe which we may moſt properly call *our workes*. It is a high degree of mercie, that although I haue offended in many things, yet I might haue fallen into more, and more foule tranſgreſſions, had not his mercie reſtrain'd me. It is an addition of mercie, that the *Lord*, who *ſpared not the Angels which kept not their firſt eſtate*, but preſently caſt them downe from Heauen, is long ſuffering towards me, and expects my returne to him, almoſt at mine owne leaſure. *Non continebam à ſceleribus, & tu á verberibus abſtinebas.* He farther enlargeth his mercy, when this *long expectation* and forbearance *brings mee to repentance*, and that hee toucheth my heart with compunction and remorſe. Againe when his mercie leaues me not in an vnfruitfull repentance, in the bitterneſſe of my ſoule; but accepts of it, and ſeales vnto me, the comfort of the remiſſion of my ſinnes. Yet he followes this with another; giuing me the power to amend my life, and hereafter to walke more cautelouſly. Nether are his mercies yet ſhortened, but *new euery morning*, nay euery moment & minute in that he giues me conſtancie and perſeuerance, that I fall not into a *recidiuation*, a *relapſe*. Laſtly, there is the height of mercy, when he giues me, a miſerable ſinner, *who am not worthy ſo much as to lift vp mine eyes to heauen*, an aſſured hope of obtaining heauen.

Pſ. 145. 9.

1.

2.

Bern. de 7. Panib'. ſer. 2.

3. Rom. 2. 4.

4.

5.

6. Lam. 3. 23.

7.

Here are *ſeauen degrees of mercy*, like thoſe

Mat.15.32. *seauen loaues*, wherewith thousands were refreshed. And I might with St *Bernard* gather vp many
Loco citat. *baskets full* of the *fragments* of each of them. But what heart can comprehend, what discourse can containe those *many*, *very great* and *tender mercies*, that know no other bounds but æternitie.
Psal.103.17. *The mercie of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting*: *ab æterno per prædestinationem, in æternum per glorificationem.*

Great are the *mercies of the Lord* euen in his
1 *executions of Iustice* 1 That he will at all shew vs so great a testimonie of his loue, as to correct vs.
Reu.3.19. *Quos amo, arguo.* That, *Ezech.* 16.42. *I will be no more angry*, is an euident token of the *Lords* greatest anger. *Tunc magis irascitur, cum non*
Bern in Cant. Serm.42. *irascitur. Let fauour be shewed to the wicked hee will not learne righteousnes*, sayth the *Prophet Isa.* 26.10. The presumptiō of *impunity* will breed *impudence*, in sinning: and that not stay, till it haue brought in most fearefull *impenitency*. *Super omnem iram miseratio ista*, as S^t. *Bernard* exclames; such *forbearance*, such *conniuence*, is beyond all *vengeance*. Let then this mercy of the Lord first shew it selfe, that he will be pleased to *disciplinate* and correct vs: and not leave vs to our owne corrupt imaginations: not *giue vs ouer to the inuentions* of *our owne hearts*: and in the *second place*
2 he will not forget to be a *Father of mercies* towards vs, in the *measure* of his corrections. *It is*
Heb.10.31. *a fearefull thing* indeede *to fall into the hand of the Lord*: but it is then onely, when his *left hand* of

Clemen-

Clemencie doth not know, what his *right hand* of *iuſtice* and *ſeuerity* purpoſeth to inflict. But ſuch *iuſtice without mercy*, onely attendes thoſe, that haue reiected and contemned both. Otherwiſe, there is euer a hand of mercie, either ready, to ſtay the hand of the Lords ſeuerity towards the pænitent, *as the Angell held Abrahams hand*, when he was ſtriking; or at the leaſt to breake the force of the blowes; to moderate and temper them according to our patience. As the *Prophet Habbakuk* makes it his *petition*. *In wrath remember mercy* (ſo our laſt tranſlation hath it) but the *vulgar* makes it a confident *perſwaſion*. *Cum iratus fueris, miſericordiæ recordaberis.* Indeede wee haue *Gods* owne *word*, nay his *oath* for it, as *Dauid* had: *Once haue I ſworne by my holineſſe that I will not lye vnto Dauid. If his children forſake my law, I will viſit their iniquity, with the rod & with ſtripes.* (but it ſhall be *In Plagis filiorum hominum*, with no more cruell ſtripes then humane infirmitie can beare; as we read the ſame promiſe repeated.) *Miſericordiam autem non auferam. Neuertheleſſe my mercy & louing kindneſſe ſhall not depart from them.*

Habb. 3. 2.

Pſal. 89. 32.

2 Sam. 7. 14.

Behold then what *conſolations Dauid* had in the *many mercies of the Lord*: & the ſame are ſtill ſtretched out ouer vs; if as he was *amĩ after Gods heart*, we be after *Dauids*. What euer calamitie or preſſure be vpon vs, we muſt keepe holy *Iobs* æquanimitie and good temper, *to receiue euill, as well as good from the hand of the Lord*. But when

the *visitation* is particularly discerned to be the *Plague*, as *Dauid* here desired: when we see that *the hand of the Lord* is vpon those houses, where *Domine miserere* is set to keepe the doore: Neuertheless as in *Samsons* riddle, *Out of the eater came meate, out of the strong came sweetenesse*: so from the greatest terrours of this deuouring disease, much hony and sweetenesse and comfort may bee extracted; if we first know the *causes* of the *Pestilence*. The *Physicians of the body* seeke the causes in nature, and assigne two. An *outward*, from the *contagion* of the *aire*; An *inward*, from the *constitution* of our *bodies*. But the *Physitians of the Soule*, make their search *beyond nature*: and for the true *outward cause*, looke *aboue nature*, to the *will* and *Prouidence of Allmightie God*; for the *inward cause*, looke *belowe nature*, vpon the *corrupt will & Sinne of man*. Both these *Dauid* here acknowledged: *within him*, *Peccaui valde*; *without* him and *aboue him*, it was *Manus Domini*. Both which he comprehendes *Ps.* 38. 2. 3. *Thine arrowes stick fast in me, & thy hand presseth mee sore: there is no soundnesse in my flesh, nor rest in my bones*. Why? *because of my sinne*. And from both these, wee may take many soueraigne *Præseruatiues*.

Iud. 14.

1. Whatsoeuer befalls vs in the *time* of *Pestilence*, comes from the *hand of the Lord*, by his *will* and *permission*. Let vs not therefore, like *angry dogs*, which runne after the stone that is throwen at them, behold with impatience and murmure, the prints of *Gods arrow which flyes by*

Ps. 91.

day

day: but looke to that *hand*, that ſent it, and *be hũbled vnder* Gods hand. And in the 2d. place, let vs perſwade our ſelues, that whatſoeuer comes from the *Lord*, ſhall tend to our *good* and ſaluation. *All things worke together for the good of them that feare him. Peccata quoq;* ſaith S*t*. *Aug*. Our *ſinnes wrought* that vnſpeakable *good*, when they occaſioned the comming of a *Redeemer*, who *wrought the good of our ſaluation* 30 *and* odd *yeares* here vpon earth. And they *ſtill worke* for our good, in calling for *chaſtiſements*, which are *good* for vs. But in the 3d. place. The deſerts of our ſinnes doe farre goe beyond all our moſt inſupportable ſufferings. How much more then are we to magnifie the *Father of mercies*; that neuer deales with his children according to the proportion of their tranſgreſſions: And if that *God of pure eyes* did not behold *iniquitie* in vs, his hand would neuer be heauy vpon vs. Therefore 4thly. If we deſire to prevent the *infection* of the *Peſtilence*, we muſt flye the *infection* of our owne *concupiſcence*, and purifie our hearts by faith and vnfained repentance. For it is the firſt *degree of madnes: Nolle quempiam à malis ſuis iuſtè quieſcere, & Deum iniuſtè a ſuâ velle vltione ceſſare.* To expect that the Lord ſhould reſt from his moſt juſt worke of *puniſhing vs*, if we will not reſt from our owne vniuſt workes of *provoking him*. Thus perhaps we may divert the *Peſtilence* from our *perſons*. And as our *Kingly Prophet* cõforts himſelfe, and all the godly. *A thouſand may fall at our ſide, & ten thouſand at our right hand, yet it ſhall not come*

2. Rom. 8.

Ro: 8.

3.

4.

Greg. ep: Lib. 8. c. 41.

Pſ. 91.

come neere vs. But if it be approch't ſo neere, that we are not neerer to our ſelues; that it is euen vpon vs: there is neuertheleſſe *balme in Gilead*, there are *remedies* at hand. *Iob* præſcribes a *cordiall*: *Hope* euen aboue hope. *Though he ſlay me, yet I will truſt in him.* Iob 13.15. St *Luke*, (himſelfe being a *Phyſitian*, but from the mouth of a *greater*,) præſcribes an excellent *diet*, which is *Patience*. *In your patience poſſeſſe yee your Soules.* Luc.21:17. St *Iames*, *Prayer*, which is a medicine both *purgatiue* and *præſeruatiue*. *Is any among you afflicted, let him pray; Is any ſicke, let him call others to pray with him.* Iam.5.13. This will either remooue the *Plague* from *vs*, or *vs* from *the Plague*.

What then doſt thou feare, O man of litle faith? Doth *ſolitarineſſe* affright thee, becauſe thou art an *vnwilling Heremite* in a peopled citie: ſhut vp frō the ſociety of freinds & acquaintance? Thou foole! *Angels* will be thy *Guardians*, and the *Lord* himſelf *thy Keeper, to make thy bed in all thy ſicknes.* Doth *Death* appale thee? *Ariſtotle's* φοβερὸν πάντων, and *Bildad's, King of Terrors.* Iob 18.14 Why this is thy *Debt* to *Nature*, & thy *Paſſage* to *Glory*. And what though the *Peſtilence* be appointed one of *Death's Collectors*, and *Tole-gatherers*, to gather thee to the reſt of thy *Fathers*? This may ſeparate thy ſoule from thy body; but in *S. Paul's* confidence, *what ſhall bee able to ſeparate thee frō the loue of God in Chriſt Ieſus?* Ro.8.34. Let vs therefore willingly & cheerefully, with holy *Dauid*, ſubmit our *bodies* to *fall into the hand of the Lord*, & to fall by his hand, into the mouth of the graue: ſo long as we may ſecurely with *Dauid*,

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commend our ſpirits into the hands of the ſame Lord. But let me not fall into the hand of man.

Pſ.31.4.

2. Negatiue part of Reſolution.

I ſhall giue you this *Negatiue part* of his *Reſolution* in few words. The *hand of man* is his *power*; and his power becomes formidable by his *Malice*. *Why boaſteſt thou in miſcheif, O mightie man?* Pſ.52.1. *Dauid* had oftentimes the experience of this *malicious power* of men, as in that *Pſalme* he cõplains of *Doeg's* calumnies: and elſwhere of *Saul's* furie, and *Sheba's* treacherie, nay his owne ſonne *Abſalom's* conſpiracy, *Shimei's* curſing and railing, and the like. No wonder then, if he ſo feelingly except againſt the *hand of man*. For in the *Originall* it is ſet downe by way of *petition* with vehemence and importunitie. *Incidamus obſecro. Let vs I pray.* It ſhall be a great courteſie, and happines, to *fall into the hand of the Lord*, but *by no meanes into man's hand*. Albeit he puts them into the ballance, and this be but the *hand of Adam* (which is the word in the *Originall*) אדם. weake, fraile, corruptible, contemptible, *vaine man*, nay, *vanitie it ſelfe*: that, *the hand of Iehova*, the יהוה. *Lord of power and ſtrength*. But *the goodnes of the Lord endures continually*, as it followeth in that before-alleaged 52. *Pſ.* This goes hand in hand, as an inſeparable companion with his *power*: whereas *man's power* is ſeldome ſeene in ſo good company. And did not the Lord ſet limits to the *malice* of *man*, like to the *raging ſea*: *thus farre ſhalt thou goe, and no farther*: did not he ſhorten and direct the power of man, better then he intends it; *No fleſh could be ſaued*. Doe not we heare S. *Paul* ſpeake

of

Gal.5.15. *of one man biting and deuouring another?* Doth there not ſtand vpon record, an *encounter* of his with *beaſts at Epheſus? Homo homini lupus. Man* is a *Wolfe*, a *Panther*, a *Tiger*, moſt vnnaturall to his owne kinde: ζῶον ὠμότατον. When he is once *fleſht* with bloud, he becomes as inſatiable as the *Horſe-leech*. He was at the firſt created *milde* and *gentle*, but afterwardes he tooke this ill qualitie from him, who was ἀνθρωποκτόνος. *a manſlayer from the beginning.*

1.Cor.15.32.

Plutarch.

Prou.18.21. There is *manus Linguæ*, the *hand*, or *power of the tongue.* Let me not fall into the *power* of *man's tongue.* It is a ſhop, an armorie of hurtfull inſtruments. There are *ſwords*, and *arrowes*, and *razours*, and *poyſon of Aſpes.* He that *detracts* or backbites, kills three at once; *himſelfe*, his *auditors* that credit his falſe calumnies, and *their good names*, who are traduced. *Libels*, and that late new way of reducing the moſt ſerious matters to ridiculous *Ballads*, and *Rimes*, are the iſſues of the power of man's tongue. *Facilè volant, non facilè violant.* Their words are light of wing, but deepely wounding.

Aeru:

And if the power of *man's tongue* be ſo pernicious, much more then ſhall I deſire not to fall into the hand or power of man, in his *executions.* His hatred is immortall, his reuenge barbarous, and not only cruell, but full of opprobrious inſultations. As I haue read of an *Italian*, whoſe malice was like the *Elephant*, ten yeares in bringing forth; and ſee the monſtrous birth. Hee fained a reconciliation with that party that had offended him: Takes advantage

Richteri Axiom. Polit:

of

of his credulous simplicitie, and when he had him at his mercie, promiseth to spare his life, if he would renounce his *Faith*, and deny his *God*. This was no sooner yeelded to, but lest that word might be re-call'd, he makes it his last word: and glories of the sweetnes of this reuenge, that he had taken it both vpon body and soule.

Neither doth the *hand of man* extend it selfe only to the *persons* of men: but proceedes farther, to lay waste whole *countries*, to pervert whole *states* and common-wealths, to demolish amongst other houses, the *houses of God*, to deface *Religion*. And this was it which *David* here feared, lest the enemies might take the *Arke of the Lord*, as formerly they had often done, and so interrupt the *seruice*, and *worship* due vnto his *holy Name*: therefore, *not into the hand of man*.

Simeon and *Levi brethren and instruments of cruelty, In their anger they slew a man, and digged downe a wall*: (that is) the *Scribes* and *Priests* being of both those *Tribes*, slew the *Man Christ Iesus*: and digged downe the *walls* of *that Temple*, which he promised *to build up in three dayes*. And againe, *Simeon and Levi*; *Iesuited Lay-men*, and *Iesuiticall Priests*, sworne brethren in that diuelish conspiracy of the *Powder-plot*: They slew a *man*, a *Christ*, an *anointed of the Lord*, (in their designe and attempt at least) and not onely *the head*, but the *representatiue body* of this whole land. They digged downe a wall too, and *digged deepe to hide their counsailes from the Lord*. *Cursed be their anger for it was* fierce

Gen. 49. 5.

Iohn. 2. 19.

Isa. 29. 15.

fierce: But blessed be the *God of Iacob* that defeated their anger. Let vs neuer fall into the barbarous *hands* of *such men*: such *vnfortunate gentlemē*, (as they are termed by soē of their adhærēts;) Vnfortunate in nothing, but that they gaue not the blowe. Nor into the more mercilesse hands of such men, who can slay a man after he is dead; and kill him in his *Faith*: Make him a *Reuolter*, a *Renegado*, an *Apostate*, a *miraculous Proselyte*, a *Conuert in the graue*. So that, it is not without reason, that the *Preacher*, after long search and diligent enquiry, returnes this verdict. Eccles.7.28. *One man amongst a thousand haue I found; but a woman among all those haue I not found.* There is then neither *man*, nor *woman*, not any of all *mankinde*, of *either sexe*, in whose hands I may securely trust my selfe, but in the *hands* of that *One man, who knew no sinne*: yet was *made man*, nay *sinne* for me, nay for vs all. His *hands* were stretched out vpon the *crosse*, to receiue *vs*: *his hands* are still *open*, to receiue *our prayers*, and to *offer* them vp to his *Father* on our behalfes: and himselfe readie at *the right hand of his Father*, to make *intercession* for vs, that his hand may be stayed, which is against vs.

We are already in *Araunahs threshing floore*, vnder the flail, vnder the *rod*, and heavy *visitation* of the *Lord*. Here then erect an *Altar*, and prepare a *Sacrifice*. If they be not ready, we needs not be at any greater expense to purchase them, then our *Praiers*. *Deus providebit*, God *must*, and *will provide* himselfe a sacrifice. Nay *Prouidit*, I presume

ſume he hath prouided both. And that, *not Araunah as a King*, but *the King of Kings*, hath furniſht vs with that, which coſt vs nothing, of our *owne*; *Hearts* for *Altars*, and (I doubt not) *contrite hearts* for *Sacrifices*. *Sacrificia Domini Spiritus contribulatus*: which he will not, nay which he cannot deſpiſe. We haue the *Place*, the *Altar*, the *Sacrifice*, the *Prieſt*. What remaines then? but that we ſhould, with our *Kingly Prophet Dauid*, Firſt offer vp our *burnt offerings*, the incenſe of our prayers and ſupplications, with feruent deuotion; and pray, that they may be accepted in that *propitiatorie ſacrifice Chriſt Ieſus*: and next, our *Peace offerings*, our prayſes and thankſgiuings, when we ſhall perceiue, that the Lord is entreated for the *Land*, by our *Prayers* and *Faſtings*: and the *Plague*, with all other his *viſitations*, ſtayed in *our Iſrael*. He heare vs, in *that name aboue all names*, of his bleſſed *ſonne Ieſus Chriſt*, *in whom he is well pleaſed*. To which *Father*, and *Sonne*, with the *holy Spirit*, God æternall, be aſcribed all *honour*, and *power*, by the whole *Quire* of *Angels*, and *Men*, now and euer; Amen.

Pſ. 51. 17.

V. 25.

FINIS.